



THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

Dufty Hits the Ground Running

District 8 Supe Has His Work Cut Out for Him

By Erin O'Briant

Supervisor Bevan Dufty has just about settled into his offices at City Hall—the chambers that once belonged to the previous District 8 supervisor, Mark Leno. Dufty has hung paintings by Noe Valley artist Tom Mogensen on the walls and a few mementos over his desk, including a recent letter of congratulations from Representative Nancy Pelosi. As Dufty talks, he walks in and out of his aides' office, checks appointments on his online calendar, and waves to passersby in the hall.

"I'm like Liza Minelli—I'm staying on tour," Dufty says of his approach to public life.

He keeps his office door open most of the time. When he can, he roams the streets of his district talking to constituents. He's even putting together a mobile stand that he can use as a place to talk with neighbors anywhere, anytime.

Dufty doesn't hesitate to toot his own horn, frequently mentioning his degree



In keeping with his intention to "always eat and hold meetings in District 8," newly elected Supervisor Bevan Dufty recently stopped by Café XO on Church Street. Photo by Beverly Tharp

from the University of California, Berkeley, and his early internship with groundbreaking U.S. Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm. He's still in campaign mode, he says, and he doesn't want that to change. "I'm very extroverted right now."

As accessible as Dufty may want to be, it has taken me two months to gain an audience with him. He's cancelled four interviews so far, and waiting for him to call

me back has begun to feel like a hobby. He interrupts our long-awaited interview frequently to chat with members of the parade of lawyers, planners, activists, and bureaucrats marching in and out of his office. Dufty, it seems, is being pulled in a few dozen directions at once.

After a hard-won victory—which

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Got the Jitters?

Try Calming Your Nerves With NERT Training

By Sharon Gillenwater

The beginning of February was marked by a flurry of small earthquakes, the loss of the space shuttle Columbia, threat of war in Iraq, clashes with nuclear-armed North Korea, and the raising of the terror level to orange, the second-highest in our nation's color-coded warning system. Crisis overload had many Noe Valley residents feeling as if they'd had one too many lattes at Martha & Bros.

"What's that horn!?" screeched one of the coffee shop's patrons, who was sitting on a 24th Street curb enjoying the mid-day winter sunshine when a distant siren sounded.

"Relax," said her companion. "That thing goes off every week like clockwork. It's just a test."

The warning siren, which has been tested every Tuesday at noon for years, has suddenly taken on a new resonance with city dwellers living on edge. The events of early February seemed to escalate the

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The Lure of France

Many Noe Valleyans have a soft spot for France. And some of us actually scrape together the euros to go there once in a while. But owning a place in Paris? Isn't that a *tarte-in-the-sky* fantasy?

That's what Suzanne Gendreau thought, before she really looked into it. Now she and her husband, Michael, and their two daughters, Madeleine, 9, and Ingrid, 6, are the proud owners of a flat on a street in Paris called Rue des Martyrs. "It's a lot like 24th Street in Noe Valley, except it's from the 18th century," she says.

The apartment is available for rent by the week through a Noe Valley business called France for Rent (see story on page 17)—except, of course, when Suzanne and her family are vacationing there.

So how did Gendreau find this pied-à-terre? Well, for one thing, she looked on the Internet. She also started learning French. Pronouncing *arrondissement* was a feat in itself. But why don't we let her tell you the rest. —Editor

How I Fulfilled My Dream of Owning an Apartment in Paris

By Suzanne Gendreau

My story begins in February of 2001. My husband Michael, a gentle yet persistent creature, was working nonstop and traveling constantly. So he asked if I would be in charge of investing our two young daughters' college funds, which were sitting in a savings account earning a meager 2 percent interest.

Michael thought that since I was staying at home tending to our domestic flock—children, house, and occasional gardening consultations—I would have the time to learn about investing in the stock market. I thought, *He can't be*

serious! Just seeing the trading floor on TV filled me with anxiety—the numbers flying across the screen, the shouting and gesturing, the bell dinging like a fire alarm at the close of the session.

No, if I wanted to be successful in this endeavor, investing our family's precious resources, I'd have to come up with something creative, something I was really interested in. Real estate! Yes, houses! I truly loved houses and architecture. I had searched for a year for our current home. Each Sunday, I would load up the car with toys and boxes of juice, and the children and I would make the rounds of the open houses.

Yes, buy a house, but where? I knew it would have to be a place that my husband and I both loved. Also, I needed to convince Michael that my detour from tedious, mind-numbing stocks to comfy, homey, affordable property was economically viable. It also had to be a place where we would be willing to pay a second mortgage, smiling. But where?

Then it came to me. How easily the word slipped from my lips.... *Paris!*

Paris. Is it not the greatest city in the world? The center of art and culture? The only vacation destination where it can rain every day and you can still come home beaming, telling everyone how romantic your trip was?

La recherche The research

A week later, as I was scouting for information on Paris real estate prices, I came across an article on the Internet titled, "Your Own Apartment in Paris Can Be Closer Than You Think." The story was about Catherine Aubale Epstein, a French-American real estate broker working for a firm in San Francisco, on Fillmore Street. (She now has started her own business: Paris Immo Realty.) The story said Epstein took clients step by step through purchasing, financing, and renovating apartments in Paris.

That very moment I telephoned and set up an appointment. Little did I know how fortunate I would be to find this amazing woman. Catherine is charming, totally professional, and a lot of fun to be with. Maybe it's her throaty laugh, her twinkling eyes, or

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Suzanne Gendreau's daughter Ingrid helped her family scout out a building in a family neighborhood in Paris that bears a strong resemblance to Noe Valley.

Home Break-ins Decline in January

Police Arrest a 'Serial Burglar' Fleeing a Home in the Castro

By Kathy Dalle-Molle

There is good news to report about the string of residential burglaries that plagued Noe Valley over the holidays (see "Rash of Home Burglaries" in February 2003 Voice).

First, the number of home burglaries declined significantly in January. Noe Valley residents reported a total of 14 break-ins during the month. That's about a third fewer burglaries than were reported in November and December (19 and 22, respectively). The January total also dropped from the same month last year: there were 18 burglaries reported in January of 2002.

Second, police have in custody a man they believe could be connected to at least some of the holiday break-ins in the neighborhood.

Armando Carlos, a 32-year-old San Francisco parolee, was arrested on Feb. 7, after a 45-minute foot and squad-car chase through the Castro, involving more than a dozen officers from Mission Station. The suspect was charged with the burglary of a flat in the 4500 block of 19th Street near Douglass. He is currently being held in jail at the Hall of Justice on Bryant Street.

Although the SFPD would not provide details about Carlos' police record, Burglary Inspector Mark Sullivan acknowledged that "we're familiar with Carlos, and he may well be connected to the recent Noe Valley burglaries.

"We're looking into it," Sullivan

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Photo by Mary Teahan Dufty

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LETTERS 37¢

Walks for All Seasons

Editor:

Thank you for your article about one of our Mission mural tours in the February issue—"Take a Mural Walk with City Guides" [by Janis Cooke Newman, February 2003 *Voice*].

San Francisco City Guides offers over 20 walking tours of the city. Some of them are more strenuous, such as the Land's End walk, which starts in Sutro Park and wanders around the Cliff House, the Sutro Bath ruins, and the Bay Trail for a view of the Golden Gate Bridge. And some are inside walks, good for rainy days, such as the Palace Hotel and Coit Tower.

Just one correction, though—our phone number is 415-557-4266.

Susan Saperstein

Chair, Management Board

San Francisco City Guides

22nd Street resident

We apologize for the error. —Editor

Who Else Is Running Besides Newsom?

Editor:

As a longtime resident of Noe Valley, I have enjoyed reading the *Noe Valley Voice* for years.

While at my book club meeting last week, the topic of conversation turned to next fall's race for mayor of San Francisco. Although many of us had assumed that the others were resigned to Gavin Newsom as our next mayor, that was not the case. Instead, we all agreed we were sick and tired of the *Chronicle* heralding Newsom as the eventual leader of our city. I realize that many strategists believe that Pacific Heights is the only neighborhood that votes, but I am here to tell you

that my city is more than just one rich neighborhood.

I voted for Willie Brown twice, but I am now fed up with the political corruption and self-promoting regime that Mayor Brown has built on the backs of San Franciscans such as myself. I refuse to let Mayor Brown continue his political wheeling-and-dealing by placing the next mayor in office himself.

I hope your paper will provide even coverage of the mayor's race. I am interested in reading about the other mayoral candidates, such as former Police Chief Tony Ribera.

I am not politically active, and like many of my Noe Valley neighbors, I have not yet decided for whom I will cast my vote. However, I am certain a large majority of us will not vote for Newsom (otherwise known as Willie Junior).

Susan McAllister

Noe Street resident

LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail editor@noevalleyvoice.com.

Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.

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Myth: *Solar power is not economically viable today.*

Fact: In most cases, the cost for solar-generated electricity is now comparable to, and sometimes cheaper than, your utility's lowest rates. Recent state approval of significant subsidies have been instituted to encourage the adoption of solar technology.

Myth: *Solar systems take many years to pay back the investment, making it financially unappealing.*

Fact: If you're paying \$60 or more per month on electricity, chances are very good that a solar systems can break even for you the day you turn it on, with no out-of-pocket expense. (In some cases, you can even make a few bucks a month for being environmentally and socially responsible!)

Myth: *Solar power equipment is awkward looking, and I don't want to put large, ugly boxes on my home.*

Fact: New technology makes solar panels only 2 inches thin, and they can be mounted flush on your roof so as to be very unobtrusive, and in many cases, out of view from the street.

Myth: *It makes sense to hold off because technology always improves and solar power will get better.*

Fact: Unfortunately, there are no major improvements on the foreseeable horizon that should significantly change solar economics. However, CA solar rebates – which can cover almost one-half of the total costs – are expected to run out by June of this year, so acting now can save you up to 50%.

Myth: *What I do - choosing solar for my home – won't make much of a difference in the world.*

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Something to Chew on: A Dog Park Plan for Upper Douglass

By David Ryan Alexander

Nearly a year after the city introduced a new leash law and rules for creating off-leash dog areas, the future for dogs in Douglass Park—Noe Valley's biggest patch of green, along four blocks of Douglass Street—is still up in the air.

Last May, the San Francisco Recreation and Park Commission established a tougher leash law, stating that in all parks smaller than 10 acres, which includes Douglass Park, off-leash dogs must be kept in a separate area. A separate dog run already existed at the park (where 27th Street dead-ends), but both dog owners and Rec and Park staff agreed that the area was unsafe for dogs, due to the steep cliff that bordered the run. In fact, a wooden sign hanging near the path read, "Danger Cliff, Stay Back."

Since that time, Rec and Park has been taking proposals from the community about what to do about dogs in the heavily wooded park.

"Communities have choices," said Rec and Park spokesperson Becky Ballinger. "What we encourage and hope is that the dog-walking community will organize to designate a place—to ask people who are out using the park where they would like the off-leash area to be."

Resident James Collins, who owns a dog and lives near Douglass Park, came up with one such proposal and in January posted it on Craig's List (www.craigslist.com) for his neighbors to read. Collins stated in his proposal that drainage problems make the athletic field in the park unusable for most of the year. He also said local residents and professional dog walkers have been allowing their dogs to

play in the park off-leash, with or without city sanction. He therefore proposed that the entire upper tier of the park—known as Upper Douglass Park—be made an off-leash area for dogs. The lower half of the park, called Douglass Playground, would remain off-limits to dogs.

"Lower Douglass Park has more than a million dollars worth of improvements," Collins told the *Voice*, in discussing his plan. "[Much of it is] dedicated to the benefit of the neighborhood children, and that's great. But dogs are explicitly prohibited from entering that park."

The upper half of the park, on the other hand, has been sorely neglected.

"Upper Douglass Park has an abandoned restroom facility and poorly drained turf. It's used almost exclusively as an off-leash dog play area now," said Collins. "[My proposal] is not a change of use, just an official designation—that's all we're asking for."

Collins said that more than 140 neighbors and users of the park had signed his petition and proposal to Recreation and Park to make it legal for dogs to be off-leash at Upper Douglass.

But at least one local resident has expressed concern about allowing dogs to roam free. The resident, who preferred not to give her name because of past controversy surrounding use of the park, said she thinks a separate designated area would be great, but she worries about whether there will be enough room for kids to play also. "You can't pretend that there isn't at least a potential for danger," in areas open to both children and off-leash dogs, she said.

According to Ballinger, Rec and Park is still accepting proposals from the community and all the proposals will be presented at the next meeting of the city's Dog Advisory Committee. The committee can then choose to go back to the community for further discussion or designate a new policy.

No meeting is currently scheduled, but Ballinger said that at the end of the month, once the commission's budget had been submitted, a meeting date would be set.

To offer your own proposal or to get more information, call the Recreation and Park Commission at 831-2750. To view a copy of the city's dog park policy, visit <http://parks.sfgov.org>. □



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Dufty Inherits Monster Homes and Shrinking Budgets

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Dufty credits to his decision not to “go negative” during his campaign—anyone would want a few hours to bask in the glow of winning a tight race.

Dufty didn’t get that chance. He sustained a terrible blow to his personal life on the night he was elected to the Board of Supervisors. That evening, Dufty’s partner of 18 years announced that he was moving to London to be with a new love interest.

“It’s been tough, but I think I’m starting to bounce back,” Dufty says. “It’s been very humbling.”

Despite his own disappointments, Dufty does seem genuinely concerned about the people of San Francisco and his district, which includes Noe Valley.

“I really feel connected to the neighborhood,” he says.

One issue he’s starting to grapple with is the proliferation of so-called “monster” homes—houses so big that they dwarf the surrounding structures. In some cases, modest Victorians have been turned into incredible hulks, thanks to a drastic addition. In others, developers have demolished two-story cottages to build four-story behemoths. Over the past five years, the problem has occurred with increasing regularity in Noe Valley and the Castro, and led to sharp clashes among residents and builders.

Dufty doesn’t want to call the mansions monsters—he prefers the more euphemistic “oversize homes”—but he says he’s working to address the issue. He wrote a letter to the Planning Commission in mid-February, asking its members to look into the matter and give their opin-



Bevan Dufty huddles outside Church Produce with friends and constituents (from left) Carol Yenne, owner of Small Frys on 24th Street; Carol’s daughter Azia Yenne, and Bernal Heights resident Jane Perry.

Photo by Beverly Thorp

ion on the legislation crafted last year by Supervisor Leno.

“I want to approach this in a thoughtful way,” he says. “I want people to understand what designs are appropriate to a neighborhood, and I also understand that people need to make adjustments to their homes.”

Dufty adds that he doesn’t want to “paint [him]self into a corner” by advocating specific height limits or taking one side or the other at this time.

While the rich build enormous homes priced well into the millions, many Noe Valley merchants are struggling to stay afloat. The future seems shaky on 24th Street after the recent closings of Tom and Dave’s Juice It, the pet store Tropical Island, and clothing retailer Getups.

“These are definitely tough times for our city,” Dufty admits. “My focus has been to promote tourism and conventions in order to jumpstart the economy. I’ve tried to spend four hours a week with the Convention Bureau doing things around tourism.”

Dufty offered to host an event at any restaurant in Noe Valley, and said he’d be happy to spend a few hours chatting with locals at neighborhood businesses if that would help bring in customers. “I try to always eat and hold meetings in District 8,” he adds.

He also says he’ll be glad to help out local nonprofits by connecting them with potential donors when possible. His recent efforts included facilitating donations to James Lick Middle School and Rooftop Alternative School.

Will his schedule slow down anytime soon? Dufty seems doubtful. “I love my new job,” he says. “There’s a lot to do.”

Facts About Bevan Dufty

Did you know these tidbits about our newly elected District 8 Supervisor?

- His godmother is the legendary musician Billie Holiday, who was his late mother’s best friend. Jazz icon Duke Ellington was also a friend of the family.
- His late father, William F. Dufty, was married to film star Gloria Swanson. William Dufty authored the book *Sugar Blues*, which details the evils of refined sugar, and co-authored *Lady Sings the Blues*, a biography of Holiday.
- Bevan Dufty’s father was gay during the last 20 years of his life.
- His mother, Maely Dufty, narrowly escaped Hitler’s concentration camps.
- Bevan Dufty, 48, grew up near Harlem in New York City, surrounded by many of the jazz greats of the time.
- The proper pronunciation of his first name is “BEV-un.”

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Cabbages Trump Potatoes on St. Patrick's Day

By Laura McHale Holland

Long before the first St. Patrick's Day, and long before Viagra, the Irish drank mead. It is a honeyed wine that was valued for its purported medicinal and fertility-enhancing properties. There's still mead aplenty in County Clare on the Emerald Isle, but it's scarce in Noe Valley. You will, however, find other things Irish to help you bring in the green this St. Patrick's Day.

Festivities planned at the Dubliner bar on 24th Street include live music, Irish dancers, bagpipers, and free corned beef and cabbage. "We have the friendliest bartenders and the best Guinness in San Francisco," boasts Vincent Hogan, the establishment's owner. The fun starts at noon on Monday, March 17, and continues until 2 a.m. If you want to wow your fellow patrons, greet them with "Dia duit! Conas ta tu?" (pronounced "Gee a witch! Cun ass ta too?"). It means, "Hi! How are you?" in Irish.

On Saturday, March 15, St. Paul's Men's Club is hosting a St. Patrick's Day dinner in the St. Paul's parish center at 29th and Church streets. "We'll have

corned beef and cabbage, soda bread, and a cash bar. Doors open at 6, dinner's at 7, and everybody's invited," says parishioner Marie Helms. "There will also be hot dogs for kids who don't want corned beef," she adds. Admission is \$12 for adults, \$10 for seniors, and \$6 for children ages 2 through 12. Tickets are available at St. Paul's rectory on Valley Street and at the church on Sundays. You can also call 641-4829 for reservations.

Sadly, members of St. Philip's on Diamond Street will not be hosting their annual St. Patrick's Eve party this year, because the church's parish hall is being renovated and can't be used.

"It will be the first time since the parish was founded that we aren't planning a St. Pat's party," notes Father Michael Healy, the church's pastor. "Our parish started in 1910 with a little wooden structure on Elizabeth Street. Back then, Twin Peaks was farmland. That's hard to imagine now," muses Healy. "It's a pity [there's no St. Patrick's event] this year because we'll miss Jack Hart, who serves his wonderful corned beef and cabbage, and we'll miss the soda bread," he continues. "But it's still early. You never know what people will come up with."

If you are planning to host your own celebration, both Noe Valley Bakery and Bread Company on 24th Street and Drewes Market on Church Street are happy to help. The bakery will be selling

shamrock cookies and three types of soda bread. "There's plain, current-caraway, and scallion," says Pat Askam, the bakery's manager. "We'll have a good supply here, but if you want to special-order, we'll be glad to take it. A couple days' notice for the breads is good," she adds. The bakery's number is 550-1405.

Drewes Market is giving away a free head of cabbage to customers who place advance orders for corned beef. "We'll have three cuts available," says Josh Epple, who co-owns the market with his brother Isaac. "Brisket's the old-fashioned traditional. It's stringy and falls apart easily. Bottom round is a little bit leaner, more solid. And then we have the eye of the round, which is the leanest." Price per pound ranges from \$3.29 to \$4.29.

Also, as people line up at Drewes' counter on St. Patrick's Day, Irish pipers will be performing outside the store beginning around noon. "Last year, we had about a dozen drummers and bagpipers. The street was packed," recalls Epple. Drewes' number is 821-0515.

To showcase the literary side of the people who produced such proverbs as "The older the fiddle, the sweeter the tune" and "It's no use carrying an umbrella if your shoes are leaking," San Francisco's Main Library has some free offerings this month. A panel called "Lavender and Green: Queer Irish Writing," moderated by Kevin Killian on Sat-

urday, March 8, from 1 to 3 p.m., will feature readings by Jamie O'Neill, James Liddy, and Eileen Miles.

On Saturday, March 15, an Irish-American Literary Festival will offer readings, discussion, and music in two programs. The first, "Ireland and the Caribbean: Islands in the Gulf Stream," moderated by Margaret McPeake, will include readings by Kate McCafferty, Jacqueline Bishop, and Maria McGarrity, and will run from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Then, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., you can hear "Irish Women's Voices" and readings by authors and poets Nuala O'Falain, Ann Saddlemeyer, Sarah Berkeley, and Emer Martin. This second half of the festival will be moderated by Elgy Gillespie.

All events will take place in Koret Auditorium on the Main Library's lower level, 100 Larkin Street, at Grove. For more details call 557-4277.

Whether you celebrate the day or not, here's a wee bit of Irish wisdom to put in your cap: "Your feet will bring you where your heart is." ☐



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POLICE BEAT

Police Beat is a monthly roundup of crimes and other police incidents in Noe Valley, defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 21st, Fair Oaks, and 30th streets. The following crime summaries were culled from incident reports filed at Mission and Ingleside police stations during January 2003.

Burglary of Flat: Between 6 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 28, and 7 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 6; 1000 block of Noe Street

The residents of a flat in the 1000 block of Noe near 23rd Street returned home on Monday, Jan. 6, after being out of town since Dec. 28. Four days after their return, they noticed that their Dell laptop computer and Canon camera were missing from a bedroom. The residents then spoke to a neighbor who told them that he had noticed an open window in an unlocked corridor between their two flats. The neighbor closed the window, assuming the residents had left it open by mistake. The neighbor said the screen from the window was lying on the floor of the corridor and that he also had moved it out of the way. He also noticed that the security light in the corridor had been unscrewed.

When police arrived, they discovered a black shoeprint on the inside step leading to a back door. The residents noted the back door had been open when they returned home Jan. 6. Police believe the suspect entered through the window in the corridor and exited through the back door. Crime Scene Investigations was called for follow-up. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Street Robbery with Knife: 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 1; 29th and Sanchez streets

At 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 1, a man was walking his pitbull puppy along 29th Street near Sanchez when he heard two men talking loudly behind him. One of the men approached him and said in an angry tone, "You're the guy who's been scratching my car and kicking my dog." He then pulled out a knife and swung it toward the man's midsection. To avoid being cut, the man stepped back and dropped the dog's leash. The man with the knife then picked up the leash and walked west on 29th Street with the puppy.

The victim ran to his nearby home, but waited until noon the next day to report the incident to police because he was "in shock and shaking." Police provided the man with a case number and advised him to call immediately if he saw the man

and/or his dog again. Police also searched the area, but did not find either the suspect or the dog. (The puppy has since been found and returned to its owner.)

Store Burglary: Between 8 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 2, and 8:30 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 3; 3800 block of 24th Street

The owner of a grocery store in the 3800 block of 24th Street left her shop at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 2. When she returned the next morning, she discovered that \$350 was missing from the cash register, along with \$800 worth of phone cards. She also discovered a blue knit cap on a shelf near the register, which police booked as evidence. Pry marks were found on the store's rear door. Crime Scene Investigations was called to take fingerprints. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Store Burglary: 1:04 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 3; 3700 block of 24th Street

A resident of an apartment building across the street from a grocery store in the 3700 block of 24th Street called police to report a burglary in progress inside the store. At 1:04 a.m., he saw a man who appeared to be a homeless person sitting with another man in front of the store. The first man stood up, faced the glass door, and threw a brick, breaking the glass. When the door broke, the other man fled. The first man then entered the store and went to the liquor shelves and scooped up several bottles, which fell to the floor.

A few minutes later, as he was calling police, the resident saw the suspect leave the store. When police arrived, they found a blanket and a brick on the ground in front of the door. The displays near the cash register were disheveled, and packs of cigarettes and bottles of alcohol were scattered on the floor. When the owner of the store arrived, he told police that two bottles of vodka were missing, along with 60 packs of cigarettes.

As the officers at the scene waited for additional assistance, they noticed the suspect walking toward them. After he was stopped by police at the corner of 24th and Chattanooga streets, the man was positively identified by the witness. The suspect, a 48-year-old male, was read his rights, and booked at Mission Station.

Burglary of Apartment House: Between 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 4, and 7:45 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 6; and between 8 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 6; 1600 block of Noe Street

The resident of an apartment building in the 1600 block of Noe Street near 29th left his home at 8 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 6, with the windows and doors locked. While searching for a parking space upon his return home at 6:30 p.m., he drove by his building and noticed a man he had never seen before walking out of the building's side door. The man was carry-

ing a power-tool case. The man then began walking north on Noe toward 29th Street. The resident followed the suspect for half a block and then went to his residence to see if his apartment had been burglarized. He found his back door unlocked and a power drill missing from his kitchen closet.

Police responded to the scene and searched the rear of the building. They found the rear door of another apartment also unlocked and conducted a search of the apartment. Nothing appeared disturbed. They continued to search the rear of the building and found yet another back door to an apartment unlocked. Police requested that Crime Scene Investigations respond to the apartment building to locate any possible fingerprints.

About an hour later, at 7:45 p.m., a resident of one of the apartments that had been broken into came home after being gone for two days. Alerted by her neighbor to the break-ins, she checked her residence for any missing items, and discovered that two watches and several pieces of jewelry were missing from her bedroom. She also noticed that the sensor light on her back porch had been unscrewed. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Burglary of Flat: Between 4:30 and 11:55 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 4; 1000 block of Sanchez Street

A resident of Sanchez Street near 23rd returned home a little before midnight on Saturday, Jan. 4, and noticed that the deadbolt on his front door was on, even though he never uses that lock. Upon entering the home, he saw that the back door in his kitchen, a window in the bedroom, and a door leading to his garage were open. In addition, the garage door was locked from the inside, and a Sony laptop computer, a Pentax camera, and a diamond ring were missing from the home.

Crime Scene Investigations was called for follow-up, and the case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Burglary of Apartment House: Between 1 and 3:15 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 9; 1500 block of Church Street

At 1 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 9, the resident of an apartment in the 1500 block of Church Street near 27th left her apartment with all her windows and doors locked. When she returned two hours later, she found the front entrance to the building closed but not locked, and her front door wide open. Several items were missing from the home, including a Canon camera, a wooden chest filled with clothes, 100 CDs, a Panasonic CD player, and a pedometer.

Upon their arrival, police took note of surfaces the suspect could have touched. They called Crime Scene Investigations and advised the resident not to touch anything until CSI arrived. The case was assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Petty Theft: 1:40 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 10; 1500 block of Dolores Street

At 1:40 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 10, a man was having coffee at a local café when he noticed two male teenagers walking north on Dolores Street near 28th. He saw one of the teens take a parcel from the front stoop of a home in the 1500 block of Dolores Street. The man came out of the café and told the teen to return the package. The teen ignored the man and began walking west on Valley Street. The man called 911 and watched where the teen was going until police arrived.

Police detained the youth at the corner of Valley and Sanchez streets. The teen was read his rights and admitted to taking the package. He told police he had hid

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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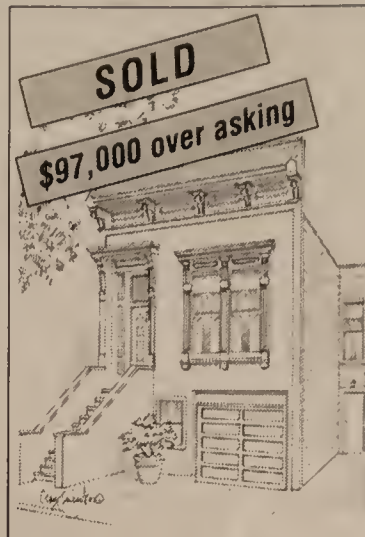
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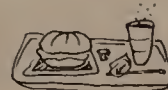
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POLICE BEAT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

it under a bush in front of a home in the 1500 block of Sanchez Street. Police transported the youth to Ingleside Station, cited him for petty theft, and called his father to pick him up. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Juvenile Division.

Store Burglary: Between 6 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 12, and 9 a.m. on Monday, Jan. 13; 3900 block of 24th Street

The owner of a candy store in the 3900 block of 24th Street closed his shop at 6 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 12. When he returned at 9 a.m. the next day, he found the rear door to the store open. He then discovered that \$250 was missing from the cash register. He also found the small refrigerator behind the counter open and several items on the counter moved around. Crime Scene Investigations was called to the store. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Residential Burglary: Between 7:45 a.m. and 6:45 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 14; 300 block of 27th Street

Two residents of a home in the 300 block of 27th Street near Church left their home at 7:45 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 14. When the residents returned that evening, they discovered that their jewelry boxes had been placed on their beds and that several pieces, including a watch, five rings, two bracelets, and 10 pairs of earrings, were missing. Nothing else was taken from the home.

The residents told police that the front door was locked when they came home, and police observed no signs of forced entry to the front or back doors. In addition, all of the windows were locked. Crime Scene Investigations was not notified because the jewelry boxes had raised textures and the shelves they were on were not smooth enough to raise prints. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Burglary of Apartment House: Between 8:20 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 17; 500 block of Duncan Street

At 8:20 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 17, a resident of the 500 block of Duncan Street near Noe left his apartment. When he returned home several hours later, he noticed that the back sliding door was open. He went to his bedroom and saw that his closet door was open and that a few pieces of clothing were on his bed. He then discovered that two cameras and a Compaq laptop computer were missing.

Police determined that the back door was the point of entry and exit. The door showed no signs of forced entry. Because the door was dirty and the surfaces from which the items were taken were neither smooth nor clean, Crime Scene Investigations was not called to the home. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Store Burglary: Between 8:50 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 19, and 12:45 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 20; 3900 block of 24th Street

The owner of a stationery store in the 3900 block of 24th Street left his store at 8:50 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 19. Upon returning at 12:45 p.m. the next day, he discovered the cash register till placed on the shop's counter. The till, which had \$200 in cash and coins in it when he left the

store on Jan. 19, was now empty. He also noticed that a display counter had been moved away from the wall. He looked behind the counter and found a hole in the wall, leading to a tradesman's entrance alley. He also discovered \$400 in cash and coins missing from the bottom drawer of a file cabinet. Crime Scene Investigations was called, and the case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Burglary of Apartment House: Between 12:45 and 4:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 20; 100 block of 28th Street

The resident of an apartment building in the 100 block of 28th Street near Dolores left his locked home at 12:45 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 20. When he returned four hours later, he discovered that his Hewlett-Packard laptop computer and floppy disk drive were missing. The resident then checked his rear door leading to the backyard and found that the dead-bolt was not locked. At the scene, police noticed damage to the rear door's door-jamb. Police called Crime Scene Investigations to follow up. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Burglary of Apartment House: Between 1 and 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 21; 200 block of 29th Street

At 1 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 21, a resident of the 200 block of 29th Street near Dolores locked and left her apartment. When she returned two hours later, her front door was still secure. However, when she walked into her bedroom, she noticed that her jewelry boxes had been emptied and thrown on her bed. The resident told police that she had several pieces of jewelry inside each box and that she was unable to give specific details regarding her losses. Police provided her with a loss form and advised her of the proper follow-up procedures. Police were unable to locate any evidence of forced entry into the apartment and consequently were unable to determine the point of entry and exit. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Residential Burglary: Between 2:25 and 3:05 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 22; 1500 block of Church Street

At 2:25 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 22, a resident of the 1500 block of Church Street near 27th left her home to pick up her children. When she returned a half hour later, she went into her bedroom and found her jewelry boxes tossed on the bed and several pieces of jewelry missing. She also noticed that her dresser drawers were open and that some of the contents had been removed. She searched the rest of the home and saw that the other rooms had not been disturbed. The resident told police that the rear door that leads to the backyard usually remained closed but un-

locked. Police found no signs of forced entry. Crime Scene Investigations was contacted to collect any possible fingerprints. The case has been assigned to the SFPD's Burglary Detail.

Vandalism to Vehicle: Between 2:15 and 3 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 26; 200 block of Day Street

A man parked and locked his black BMW convertible on the 200 block of Day Street near Church at 2:15 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 26. When he returned 45 minutes later, an unknown person had slashed the soft top of his convertible.

Petty Theft: Between 7 and 7:50 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 29; 3900 block of 24th Street

At 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 29, a man went to the liquor aisle of a grocery store in the 3900 block of 24th Street and placed a bottle of Jack Daniels and a bottle of Jim Beam whiskey in a shopping cart. He walked to another aisle and placed the bottles in a blue backpack. He left the store without paying for the two bottles of whiskey, and was stopped by a store security officer. The man was taken to Mission Station for booking. A warrant check revealed that the man had a prior conviction and that he was on parole.

The Voice thanks Mission Police Officer Lorraine Lombardo and Ingleside Police Officer Mike Smith for providing the incident reports for this month's Police Beat. The reports were summarized by Kathy Dalle-Molle.

Your Links to the SFPD

Noe Valley residents and merchants are invited to attend police-community meetings held monthly in the Mission and Ingleside police districts. The next meeting at Mission Station will be Tuesday, March 25, 6 p.m., at 630 Valencia Street near 17th Street. The next Ingleside meeting will be Tuesday, March 18, at 7 p.m., at Ingleside Station, 1 Sgt. John Young Lane, off the 2000 block of San Jose Avenue.

Meanwhile, those who live or work north of Cesar Chavez Street can report recurring problems by phoning Mission Station at 558-5400 or e-mailing Capt. Greg Corrales at gregory_corrales@ci.sf.ca.us. (To report anonymously on drugs, gangs, or other crimes, call the non-traceable hotline at 558-5452.)

Residents and merchants in "outer" Noe Valley—south of Cesar Chavez—can reach Ingleside Station by calling 404-4000 or e-mailing Capt. Kevin Dillon at kevin_dillon@ci.sf.ca.us.

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Nervous in Noe

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

fear, agitation, and jitters to levels not seen since late 2001.

They also got some people wondering about the city's emergency-alert system. Lucien Canton is director of emergency services for the City and County of San Francisco and one of the most frequently interviewed public officials these days. He chuckles when asked about the siren.

"It does seem like people are noticing it more lately," he says. "The siren system goes back to the Cold War days and was designed to warn people of incoming bombings. Today we would use it to send a signal to people to turn on their radios or TVs for a message from the emergency-alert system. If the siren ever sounds continuously at any other time besides Tuesday at noon, it means you should turn on

your radio or TV for information."

In addition to keeping informed in the event of a disaster or attack, citizens can prepare themselves to offer hands-on assistance to their families and neighbors. After the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, a group of Marina residents asked the San Francisco Fire Department to provide them with emergency training. In response to their request, the SFFD formed the Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) program, which trains and mobilizes city residents to help out in their own neighborhoods in the event of an emergency.

Since 1990, the NERT program has trained more than 11,000 city residents in emergency first aid and light search and rescue. While some residents opt for the free training so they can be self-sufficient in a disaster, others take the classes to hook up with their fellow citizens in a neighborhood emergency response team.



San Francisco firefighters teach first aid and light search-and-rescue techniques at NERT trainings held around the city. This one was held at Daniel Webster School on Potrero Hill.

Be Prepared: The following information was compiled from the NERT Auxiliary web site. For additional information about emergency preparedness and the NERT program, visit www.sfnert.org.

Your Emergency Checklist

- Store copies of important business/personal documents in a safe place.
- Identify an out-of-state contact person so family and friends can communicate with you in an emergency.
- Develop individual, family, and business emergency plans.
- Designate a meeting place for loved ones if you cannot meet at home.
- Give kids instructions about what to do if disaster strikes while they are at school.
- Designate a surrogate parent for your children if you are not able to pick them up and provide this information to your child's school.
- Learn how to shut off power, water, and gas, and do so only if necessary.
- Stockpile emergency supplies, including food, water, prescription drugs, a first-aid kit, battery-powered radio, and flashlight.

In the Event of an Emergency

- Turn off your utilities (gas, water), but only if you suspect a leak.
- Monitor the radio for emergency information and bulletins. Local emergency stations are KCBS 740-AM, KGO 810-AM, and KNBR 680-AM.
- Do not rush to the scene to volunteer. City emergency crews will establish volunteer reception sites, which will be announced over the radio.

How to Join NERT

Joining your Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) is one way you can help keep your community safe. NERT training, which is offered several times a year free of charge, will make you an important asset to your family and your community in the event of an emergency.

The NERT Training Program consists of six, three-hour class sessions, all taught by professional firefighters. San Franciscans are welcome to attend trainings anywhere in the city. Upcoming NERT trainings begin March 4 at the Miraloma Community Church in West Portal, March 15 at the Providence Church Gymnasium in Bayview/Hunters Point, and April 30 at California Pacific Medical Center—Davies Campus in the Castro.

There is no specific Noe Valley training scheduled at this time. However, Noe Valley NERT coordinator Maxine Fasulis says the Fire Department will arrange a special training if you have enough interested people and can provide the location, such as James Lick Middle School or the Noe Valley Ministry.

Preregistration is required for all NERT training courses. For more information, visit www.sfgov.org/sffdnert or call the San Francisco Fire Department at 415-558-3456.

Noe Valley is fortunate enough to have one of NERT's most active participants as its team coordinator. Maxine Fasulis has been a NERT member for more than five years. She estimates that over the past decade, "a couple hundred" Noe Valley residents have been trained by the program. Born out of a need for more people who can respond quickly to an earthquake or other Level Three disaster, the training now includes a unit on terrorism and bioterrorism, she says.

In the event of an emergency, NERT members report to a pre-designated staging area. (In Noe Valley, the team will congregate at James Lick Middle School's basketball courts at 25th and Castro streets.)

Once on location, they gather reports of various neighborhood incidents, such as fires, collapsed structures, and injuries. Working together, they prioritize the various incidents, strategize on how to re-

spond, and mobilize volunteers as needed.

While Fasulis has participated in many NERT drills over the years, she has never had to respond to a real disaster. However, she says there have been incidents where Noe NERTS have used their training to respond to smaller-scale emergencies.

"One of our NERTS was on his way somewhere when he saw a small house fire," she says. "The Fire Department was called, but he was able to extinguish the fire before they arrived."

Despite all the time she has invested in NERT over the years, Fasulis hopes that her skills will never be needed. Still, she encourages everyone to take advantage of the free NERT training offered by the San Francisco Fire Department.

"You will benefit from some really valuable information," she says, "that might help you protect your home and family someday." □

Burglar Nabbed in The Castro

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

added. "We're backtracking and going through cases in the Upper Market area, the Castro, Noe Valley, and other nearby neighborhoods."

The Feb. 7 police chase began shortly after 1:30 p.m., after a resident of a flat on 19th Street called police, saying he had just encountered a man in his hallway who had kicked in his front door and was attempting to steal property from his home. When he yelled at the man to get out, he ran out the front door.

Police responded within minutes and spotted the suspect, later identified as Carlos, fleeing along 18th and other streets in the Castro and Upper Market areas. They chased him over fences, through bushes, and in and out of backyards and apartment lobbies, before finally apprehending him on 18th Street near Hattie. During the chase, the suspect dropped a grocery bag that contained two rings, a Compaq laptop computer, Sony CD-ROM drive, Sony Clie personal organizer, and a Westinghouse CD player.

Police later searched Carlos' pants pockets and found 15 pieces of jewelry, as well as burglary tools and a hypodermic needle. The contents of the grocery bag, along with many of the items in his pockets, were identified as belonging to residents of a home in the 3300 block of Market near Clayton, which had been burglarized that same day.

"We can't yet put Carlos at the scene of that burglary, but we're working on it," said Sullivan.

In addition, Carlos' description matched that given by an eyewitness to an earlier break-in in the Upper Market area. The description was detailed on a

flyer that Upper Market merchants had posted in their store windows following several recent home burglaries, including one on Caselli Avenue at 1:45 p.m. on Jan. 28. (Carlos is 6 feet tall, 175 pounds, and known for his shaved head and scar on the back left side of his head. At the time of his arrest, he was dressed all in black, except for white tennis shoes.)

Noe Valley Beat Officer Lorraine Lombardo, who was the first to arrive at the 19th Street flat the afternoon of Feb. 7, believes Carlos also can be linked to one or more of the 41 break-ins that occurred in Noe Valley in November and December. But even if not, she's glad to see a man she describes as a "serial burglar" in custody.

"After the large number of burglaries during the holidays, I hope people will feel better knowing there's one less bad guy out on the streets," she says.

Still, Lombardo cautions residents not to be complacent.

"People need to build safety into their daily life," she says. "Just like brushing your teeth is part of your daily routine, so should remembering to lock your door and deadbolt it. Think about protecting your property and watching out for your neighbors. There might not be a burglary today or tomorrow in your neighborhood, but there will be burglaries again. You never know when they will happen and you have to be prepared."

(Note: Among the items found in Armando Carlos' possession during his arrest on Feb. 7 were a yellow metal pocketwatch with a white face and a white metal bracelet with the initials RLL. The owners have yet to be identified. If you are the owner of either item or have information relating to the burglaries in Noe Valley or other nearby neighborhoods, please contact Inspector Mark Sullivan at 415-553-1954.) □

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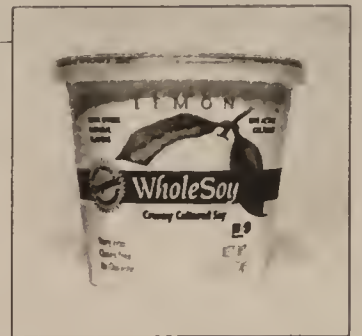


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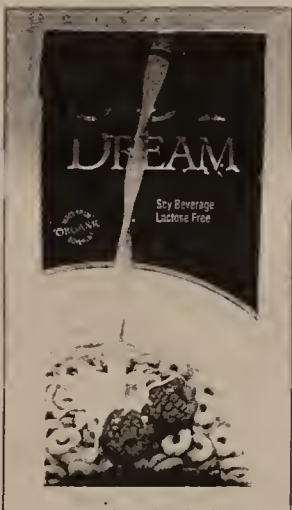
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How I Landed an Apartment in Paris

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the special way she says "Stupeed," like only the French can.

After meeting with Catherine, I realized I had many more things to think about. Which *arrondissement*, or district, did we want to buy in? (Paris has 20.) Where could we afford? One thing I knew for sure—bigger was better, even if it meant buying on the edges of a perfect location. I reminded myself that one day I would have two teenage girls. What would be a better choice, a studio in the trendy Marais or three rooms a little further out?

I telephoned my dear friend Bobby, who had lived in Paris for several years. I asked her where I could still find old Paris, or a neighborhood with buildings from the 1800s not yet overrun by commercialism and tourists. It had to be a place with interesting shops, *boulangeries* (bakeries), and produce stores, as well as playgrounds and parks for families—both charming and child-friendly. I had been to Paris several times myself, always staying on the Left Bank or near the elegant Place des Vosges. But I knew those neighborhoods were very expensive and I would not get a lot for my money.

"Suzanne, you would love the Ninth Arrondissement," Bobby said. "If you live in the Ninth, it's only a 10-minute walk up to [the Church of] Sacré-Coeur in Montmartre and a 10-minute walk down to the Opéra Garnier. And the neighborhood has everything."

I telephoned Catherine and asked her opinion. She agreed with Bobby, adding, "Métro Saint-Georges has always been a nice address."

It was April, and Catherine was leaving for Paris, so I gulped and signed a contract for her to represent us. I wrote her a check and gave her our financial information, and off she flew to find our dream.

Meanwhile, I called the airlines to see when we could fly out in September. Sept. 10, 2001—a Monday—was chosen. That gave us enough time to save more money, avoid the tourist season,



Rue des Martyrs is a Paris street the Gendreau family likens to 24th Street, with bakeries, flower shops, and newsstands.

and arrange an apartment to stay in while we looked for one of our own. Catherine had also agreed to go back to Paris two weeks before we arrived, to set up appointments for us to view apartments.

Le 10 Septembre Sept. 10, 2001

On Sept. 10, we all departed on a late-afternoon flight direct from San Francisco to Charles de Gaulle Airport in Paris. Our flight arrived around 2 p.m., and we took a taxi to the apartment we had rented in Montmartre. We dropped off our luggage and, curious about our surroundings, decided to try to stay up as long as we could, before sleep overtook us.

Michael needed a chip for his cell phone. We all needed real food. So we left our apartment to find the cell phone shop. Then we ran across the street for pasta at a little neighborhood restaurant. While waiting for our meal, Michael put his shiny new chip in his cell phone and called into work (he's an acoustic engineer). Suddenly, he had a strange look on his face. "Something really horrible has happened," he said. He told us the news: the World Trade Center and the Pentagon had been attacked by terrorists.

Stunned, we got our food to go, and raced back to the apartment to find the TV, which was in the closet. I tele-

phoned my father to ask, "What should I do? Should I continue looking for an apartment? What is going to happen?" He said, "You must continue with your plans, life cannot stop." But I was not sure continuing was appropriate.

I called Catherine to see how she felt. When I reached her, she was on two phones, trying to reach friends and family in the States. She told us our flights were among the last planes to make it out of the U.S. With the airlines at a standstill, we could not go home even if we had wanted to. Numbly, we made plans to meet the next morning.

As the European sky grew dark, a gentle rain fell on the rooftop above us and the children drifted off to sleep. My head was slowly dropping. It didn't matter if I was sitting up or lying in bed. Exhaustion took over. My batteries died.

Le voisinage The neighborhood

The next morning, we fed the children croissants and strawberries. Then we walked about six blocks from where we were staying in the 18th, to the Ninth Arrondissement. We had arranged to meet Catherine at the subway stop—Métro St.-Georges—serving the Place St.-Georges. We instantly loved the square, with its circular fountain surrounded by three huge mansions.

The plan was that Michael would take our daughters to the Pompidou Center while I looked at the apartments Catherine had ready for us to view. If I found anything I liked, I would phone Michael on his cell phone and he and the girls would come join us.

Catherine and I walked up Rue Notre Dame de Lorette. As we walked, I told her that the Ninth was exactly the kind of neighborhood I wanted. As we reached Rue Navarin, we came to a small cobblestone plaza called Place Gustave Toudouze. Nearby were a tea

salon and two Indian restaurants, with outdoor tables and chairs shaded by huge plane trees. We continued down Rue Navarin, where we passed many small boutiques and antique shops.

The first two apartments we saw were small and dark, and I started to worry. We had traveled halfway around the world on a whim and I had only 10 days to find the perfect apartment! Then I remembered Catherine's advice back in San Francisco: "Suzanne, you will know the apartment you want to buy in Paris the moment you walk in." I held this idea tucked close to my heart as we continued walking to the third of four apartments we were seeing in the St. Georges area.

Our next appointment was down Rue des Martyrs. This street made my head spin, but in a good way. Rarely found in the tourist books, Rue des Martyrs is where the real Parisians live, Catherine told me. There were cheese shops, *charcuteries* (delis), olive sellers, an international newsstand, a fish shop, three boulangeries, three wine shops, butcher shops.... I wanted to stop and take it all in, but Catherine hurried me along.

Then she suddenly stopped in front of an ornate building with flower-filled balconies. "I am really excited about this one," she confided. I couldn't even find words for how I felt.

As my heart started pounding, a Parisian real estate woman met us outside the two large oak doors at the entrance to the seven-story building, which, it turned out, had been built in 1840. (I also later learned that Maurice Ravel, the composer, had lived there as a child.)

Once inside, we saw cobblestone courtyards with small antique stone water fountains. I could see shutters on all the windows as I looked up toward the sky. I was enchanted.

There was scaffolding up, and the exterior walls were being painted. "This is a really good sign," said Catherine. I just nodded. I was floating in a dream.

We followed the realtor to the back staircase, then up two flights of stairs to the third floor. She reached in her pocket and drew out a key. I held my breath as the door to the apartment opened.

L'appartement The apartment

The first thing I saw was a hallway with two doors on the right and a door straight ahead. The hall had nice hardwood floors. I opened the first door on the right. It was the bathroom. I again held my breath—French bathrooms can be cramped and small. But this one was fine. It was what the French call American-style, having a combination shower

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

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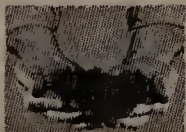
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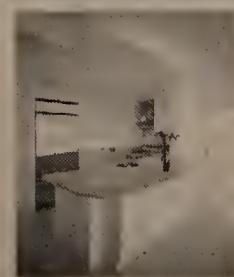
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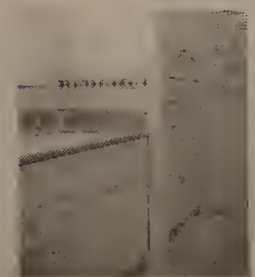
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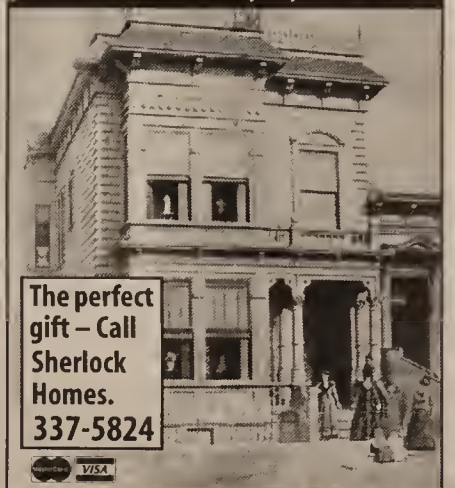
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Paris Pied-à-Terre

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

and bathtub. The fixtures had been updated, and the floors had new white tiles, inlaid with smaller black tiles that looked like diamonds. There was also a small window.

The next door led to the kitchen, which was French country-style, with original "beehive" terracotta-tile floors. I learned later that these are called ancient tiles. Then I noticed a light fixture hanging from the ceiling. It had a 1920s glass shade decorated with hand-painted flowers. Truthfully, I would have bought the apartment because of this one special feature, which I found exquisite. The kitchen also had a long French window.

The door down the hall opened to a delightful room with buttercream-yellow walls accented by white wainscoting and crown molding. I then saw a long French window with sun pouring in. Meanwhile, Catherine was opening another door asking, "Oh, what is this, the closet?" But no, there was still another room, a living room with a black marble fireplace. My mind raced. I loved this apartment.

At this point, I decided I needed Michael and the children. Strong feelings of possessiveness engulfed me. My eyes met Catherine's. She smiled and laughed. She knew what was happening. Having been in the real estate business for 27 years, she had seen this face many times before.

As I phoned Michael, Catherine opened yet another door and discovered a small bedroom. This was so much more than the studio I had come to expect.

When Michael answered, I said, "You must come now. We have found the perfect apartment!"

"Suzanne, are you sure? We just got here," he said. I insisted: "It's perfect. You must come now. We must buy it."

I explained that the apartment was big for Paris, about 500 square feet. And it needed only minor renovations: fresh paint, a new window in the bathroom, new butcher-block counters in the kitchen, and new closet doors in the bedroom. And it was *beautiful*.

In less than an hour, Michael and the kids were there and I was showing them around the apartment. That afternoon, we asked Catherine to write an offer for 950,000 francs, \$130,000 in U.S. dollars. Later that night, our offer was accepted.

In the morning, Catherine took me to the bank. Our loan was approved (with no money down and a 5.7 percent fixed interest rate for 15 years). Next we met with the *notaire*. A *notaire* is a lawyer who works the same way a title com-

The Lure of France



The Gendreaus were pleased to learn that the building that houses their apartment, at 40 rue des Martyrs, was once the home of French composer Maurice Ravel.

pany does here in the States. We learned that our taxes, transfers, and other fees would amount to 8 to 10 percent of the selling cost. Of that, the *notaire's* share was 1 to 5 percent.

The next day, Catherine had a contractor at our apartment to give us an estimate on the renovations. The work would begin the first of January. (It takes three months to close escrow in France.) Catherine agreed to return to Paris in December. She would sign the closing documents and bring home our keys! We would return in February to furnish the apartment and get it ready for an agency to handle it for weekly rentals. We flew home exhausted but thrilled.

Le reste est l'histoire The rest is history

I spent the next few months designing and redesigning where the furniture would be placed in the apartment. I packed boxes with linens, tools, hooks, and knobs. I made list after list of things to do.

Catherine rented us a truck so that the day after we got to Paris, we could drive to IKEA and have a six-hour shopping spree. I told the children it was going to be fun. I think I even said, "Fun, fun!"

I couldn't wait for February to arrive. I couldn't wait for the day we opened the door to our freshly painted apartment. We would spend the night on the floor. We would picnic on our boxes, drink wine, and eat the food we bought at the shops right outside our front door. We would be happy, very happy. Our destiny fulfilled!

A year later, I'm still marveling that

we really did buy an apartment in Paris. Every day I think: How lucky we are. How lucky my daughters are. They can be an artist or a writer or musician and live in Paris if they want to. Is this not the greatest gift we can give them?

It occurs to me that we never even touched the college fund. It is still sitting in the savings account earning the same interest rate. I have to laugh. ☐

The Gendreaus' apartment, located at 40, rue des Martyrs, can be viewed at www.franceforrent.com/martyrs. To reach Catherine Aubale Epstein, e-mail CAubaleEpstein@aol.com. And if you'd like to contact Suzanne Gendreau, she's at suzanne.gendreau@colingordon.com.

Claude Nederovique Offers France for Rent

By Corrie M. Anders

Remember the seductive refrain in that Southwest Airlines TV commercial, "Want to get away?" Well, Noe Valley resident Claude Nederovique gets away frequently—jetting off to France on trips that are part pleasure and part business.

Nederovique runs an online service that finds furnished apartments in France for U.S. vacationers and business travelers who want a little more authentic French flavor than that offered by hotels.

He opened the rental-listing business, appropriately called France for Rent, six years ago in his home office on 28th Street near Sanchez Street. In addition to www.franceforrent.com, he recently launched a second web site for upscale vacation rentals, www.parisluxuryrentals.com. "[Both sites] offer you a way to live in Paris like a Parisian," Nederovique says.

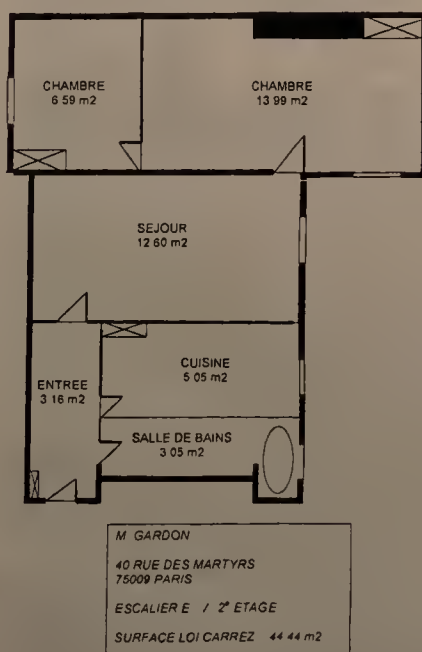
Nederovique, a French citizen who personally owns four apartments in Paris, backed into the business. In 1992, he founded the French American School in Silicon Valley, but discovered "you don't make any money with a school." To supplement his income, he published an ad to rent his Paris apartment, and "I was deluged with calls and quickly understood there was a business niche."

His France for Rent web site shows rentals by neighborhood in Paris, including the Latin Quarter, Champs-Élysées, Marais District, Eiffel Tower, and Saint-Germain-des-Prés. (Suzanne Gendreau's apartment—her story starts on page 1 of this issue—can be found in the Montmartre section, under the address 40, rue des Martyrs.) Each listing includes photos, a map of the area, a complete description of the apartment, neighborhood amenities, and weekly room rates for both high and low seasons.

France for Rent draws clients from around the country and all over the Bay Area, Nederovique says. Some live right here in Noe Valley. His local clients may even benefit from his personal recommendations. You can make a booking online, he says, or "we might work out the details over a cup of coffee at Martha's on Church Street."

Ever the consummate traveler, Nederovique returns to France at least four times a year.

"I often mix business with pleasure, because even though I was born and lived many years in Paris, there are still places I discover or love to rediscover," he says. "And one never gets tired of Paris." ☐



It helps to know French, as well as the metric system, when reading the floor plan for the Gendreaus' apartment in Paris.

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Let Bylines Be Bylines

Hanging Together by a Hair

By Lisa Ryers

I think few people, while in Paris, find themselves thinking of Noe Valley. But I've always been an odd duck, a Zen guru's nightmare, never fully in my immediate Where.

This particular night, I am thinking of Noe Valley while I stand in front of the Paris club the Loco—short for Locomotion. I don't like standing here, next to the decrepit Moulin Rouge. A fight has broken out between an Algerian guy and a British bloke. Everyone standing in line is pretending that they don't see the fight. If we can get through the gauntlet set down by the captain of the fashion police, we will find what we have read about in an Italian guidebook—three dance floors pulsating independently, where no one is fighting.

If we don't get in, it will be my fault. My dancemates, two Italians from my French class, tell me the management won't let two men inside the Loco alone. Like Mars, the Loco needs women. I compare myself with the others in line and hope that I can do the job. My style is tomboy-rockabilly. Most days you will find me in a cardigan, T-shirt, jeans, and Jack Purcells, accented with barrettes and a burgundy lipstick. The other women in line are wearing high heels, mesh tops, and heavy black eyeliner.

I tie my cardigan around my waist so the bouncer will see my T-shirt (purchased on 24th Street) stretched across my breasts. My T-shirt features a modified highway sign which says *San Francisco, Interstate 415*. The bouncer looks at it and waves us through.

Gianluca surveys the scene and reports that only two of the three floors are operational. We have the choice between techno and disco. I used to like techno until it was adopted by every spin instructor in San Francisco. Another vote against the techno floor: Gianluca sees few ladies afoot, only men waving their hands above their heads in small circles. We take the stairs and deal with those who prefer dancing to "Billie Jean."

At first, we three try to dance as if at a fraternity party, swaying and holding invisible cups. I watch a woman dancing with a guy at least a foot taller than herself, wrenching his head down for a kiss. Some of the guys from the subway station have resigned themselves to 10-euro rum and cokes. They were "green-carded in," adopted by women in line who have since abandoned them.

No trio dancing ever lasts the entire night. Someone decides. Someone gets ejected. I put my arms around Michele's neck to see if it will be me. He smiles.

He has a shaved head, but no, he doesn't. His scalp betrays no black patches, no stubble. He is not a San Francisco trendbaby. Looking at him straight on, I realize he doesn't have eyebrows either. Again I think of 24th Street and the concrete passage leading to the European salon where I go to get my moustache tamped down. Where I lie on a padded table, tense, waiting for the wax to melt. The beautician sets strips on a white towel and apologizes for her tardiness. Her previous client takes more time, she says. His girlfriend won't sleep with him unless he has the hair on his back regularly removed.

I am now entwined with a man on a Paris dance floor who cannot, for the life of him, grow a single hair. Then my thoughts cycle ahead. Do the curtains match the carpet?

Gianluca shoulders his way through the crowd, looking for someone unattached. He's having trouble finding solo flyers. It is late, and I lean against Michele and sleep in verticality.

Then Michele says, "It is *cinq.*" Time to leave. We can't find Gianluca. We don't try very hard to find Gianluca. We step into the mist, and I actually feel like the transit photo on my Orange Card: a pensive face behind thick eyebrows. I feel uneasy, like when the security guard follows me at the *supermarché*. He is more disconcerting than American security guards at Safeway because he wears a black blazer, turtle-neck, and slacks instead of a uniform and resembles a comparative literature professor at an Ivy League university.

The subway is open again. We are the only whites on the train, yet everyone gets off at Blanche station except us. We ride to the end to transfer to Daumesnil. It is still too early for an almond croissant.

There is a sign on the elevator door of my building. It says "Do Not Use" in English. Someone is using it now because it creaks as if a dead cat has been caught in a pulley. Obviously, the French residents are telling the British and American idiots not to use the damn elevator, but someone doesn't want to be told what to do. We take the stairs five flights.

In my room, his legs are like a cyclist's. He is not self-conscious. He is happy. I am self-conscious. My legs are not smooth. When she asked me about them on 24th Street, I told her to leave them alone. ☐

Lisa Ryers studies photography at UC Berkeley. Her book reviews can be found on sfstation.com. Her maternal grandfather grew up on 27th Street in Noe Valley.

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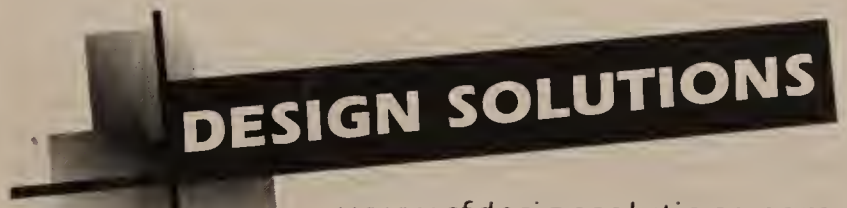
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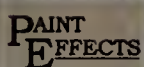
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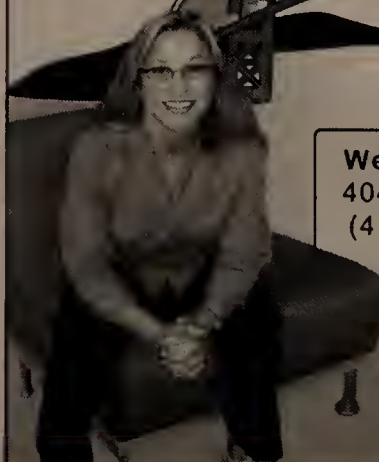
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The Cost of Living in Noe

A Hot Block of Church Street

By Corrie M. Anders

The new owners of two million-dollar homes in Noe Valley won't have to go far for public transportation.

That's because they've purchased Victorian-era homes in the 1000 block of Church Street, a principal route of the J-Church streetcar.

Buyers paid \$1,553,500 for a six-bedroom, four-bath, Queen Anne-style home built in 1898. The house was the most expensive Noe Valley property to close escrow in January, according to data supplied to the *Voice* by Zephyr Real Estate.

The 1000 block of Church Street, between 22nd and 23rd streets, also took bragging rights for the second highest price tag in January. In this case, buyers paid \$1,325,000 for a four-bedroom, two-and-one-half-bath home—another turn-

of-the-century property.

A total of 10 single-family homes sold during January, compared with 17 the previous month and 11 in January of 2002. The average price was \$936,950, and buyers generally paid just under the seller's asking price.

For the first time in recent years, not a single condominium closed escrow during the month. Eight were sold during December, and three condos changed hands one year earlier.

However, Randall Kostick, Zephyr's 24th Street office manager, cautioned residents not to read any particular significance into the January declines.

"It's just a seasonal thing," he said, noting that home sales typically fell off in January, after strong year-end sales in November and December.

Kostick pointed out that Noe Valley seemed to be filled with home shoppers in February. "The market is picking back up," he said. "We're seeing many, many more sales." □

Noe Valley Home Sales*						
Total Sales		Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
Single-family homes						
Jan. 03	10	\$580,000	\$1,553,500	\$936,950	68	98%
Dec. 02	17	\$453,500	\$1,195,000	\$795,000	36	100%
Jan. 02	11	\$454,000	\$949,000	\$684,090	25	102%
Condominiums						
Jan. 03	0	—	—	—	—	—
Dec. 02	8	\$415,000	\$1,065,000	\$699,125	38	103%
Jan. 02	3	\$480,000	\$725,000	\$603,333	60	102%
2 to 4 unit buildings						
Jan. 03	4	\$895,000	\$1,160,000	\$1,053,750	60	97%
Dec. 02	4	\$725,000	\$1,205,000	\$936,250	56	101%
Jan. 02	3	\$612,000	\$762,500	\$703,166	30	99%
5+ unit buildings						
Jan. 03	0	—	—	—	—	—
Dec. 02	0	—	—	—	—	—
Jan. 02	0	—	—	—	—	—

*Information provided to the *Noe Valley Voice* courtesy of Zephyr Real Estate (www.zephyr-re.com) and based on all Noe Valley home sales (escrow closings) recorded during month. "Noe Valley" in this survey is defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. NVV 3/03

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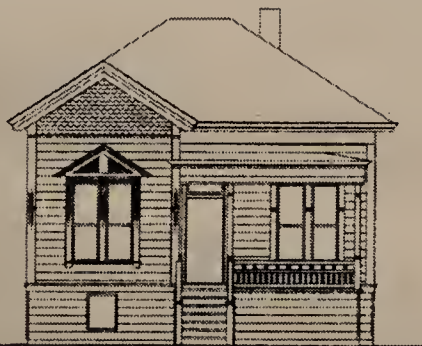


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Noe Valley Rents*

Apartment Size	Average Rents (Oct. - Dec. 2002)	Average Rents a Year Ago (Oct. - Dec. 2001)	% Increase (+) or Decrease (-)
Studio	\$ 1,126 / mo.	\$ 1,137 / mo.	- .967%
1 bedroom	1,570 / mo.	1,657 / mo.	- 5.3%
2 bedrooms	2,093 / mo.	2,373 / mo.	- 11.8%
3 or more bedrooms	2,906 / mo.	2,931 / mo.	- .853%

*Source: Rent Tech, Inc. (www.renttech.com). NVV 3/03

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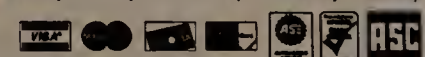
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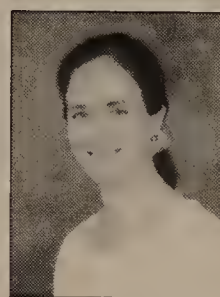
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This 'n' That

By Laura McHale Holland

Local composer and arts educator **Candy Forest** says she's shuffling off to Buffalo, N.Y., to celebrate an early Earth Day with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra on March 30. Some history buffs may recall that the City of San Francisco, along with other Northern California municipalities and, ahem, the United Nations, proclaimed the first-ever Earth Day 33 years ago on March 21—the vernal equinox—not on April 22, the day we now conduct Earth Day teach-ins throughout the U.S. The U.N. still celebrates Earth Day on March 21, ringing spring in with the dulcet tones of its peace bell. That means our Diamond Street shuffler could actually be celebrating Mother Earth nine days late.

But what does it matter, really? Ms. Forest is one of those rare people who encourages responsible stewardship of the earth every day. Using a lively mix of musical genres, her work celebrates sea otters, reptiles, elephants, giraffes—all creatures inhabiting the planet. And that's why the Buffalo Philharmonic is presenting the world premiere of "All in This Together," an hour-long concert of earth-loving music composed by Forest and her frequent collaborator **Nancy Schimmel**.

Many Noe Valleyans remember Forest as the founder and director of the award-winning **Singing Rainbow Youth Ensemble**. For 14 years, the group of youngsters, who ranged from pigtailed, scuff-shoed grammar-schoolers to high school babes and dudes, rehearsed at least once a week at the Noe Valley Ministry.

"It all seems a bit surreal," Forest says. "This concert is comprised of music that the kids and I used to perform every year at the Ministry. It's going to be quite amazing to hear it played by an 85-piece orchestra and sung by a 110-voice children's chorus! Mary Stahl, who is a terrific jazz singer, will be singing all my old parts. I just get to sit in the audience and enjoy it."

Jay Matthews, who plays French horn with the Buffalo Philharmonic, expanded Forest's existing arrangements to orchestrate the work. "He's been trying to talk me into this for about five years, because when orchestras program for families, there is a limited amount of appropriate material. Once you get past [Prokofiev's] *Peter and the Wolf* and [Holst's] *The Planets*, there really isn't anything contemporary being done that appeals to children."

To fill this need, Forest and Matthews formed a partnership called **SymphonyKids**. "All in This Together" is their first production package. To commemorate the occasion, Forest and Schimmel are producing a compilation CD of the Singing Rainbow's greatest hits, titled *Sun Sun Shine, Songs for Curious Children*.

"We intend to market SymphonyKids all over the country. I'm in talks with the Community Music Center right now about doing the West Coast premiere of "All in This Together" for Earth Day 2004," Forest says.

Tune in next year to find out if that'll be March 21 or April 22.

One date no one disputes is Valentine's Day, Feb. 14. But there are many ways to broach the subject of love. An article by **Melissa Schorr** in *San Francisco* magazine's February issue plucked nine single (unattached) San Franciscans to be showcased as "perfect 10s." Two of them live in Noe Valley. One honoree was architect



The Buffalo (N.Y.) Philharmonic Orchestra will present an Earth Day concert of tunes co-composed by Noe Valley resident Candy Forest (center). Many of the songs were originally sung and recorded by local kids in the Singing Rainbow Youth Ensemble. Forest is shown here with arranger Jay Matthews (center back) and other members of the Buffalo production crew.

and 21st Street resident **Anne Fougeron**.

"You know, one can't take this too seriously. It was done in pure fun. All my friends find it highly amusing. It's been a great source of entertainment for everybody," Fougeron says with a laugh.

Although the magazine piece was tongue-in-cheek, the nod in her direction did generate romantic interest. "I wasn't really expecting that, to tell you the truth," she adds.

The other perfect 10 was UCSF neurologist and Dolores Street resident **Dr. Michael Geschwind**.

"I'm far from a perfect 10—even my mother wouldn't give me that high a score," he quips from his cell phone on a break between patients. "It was more of a humorous honor than anything else. I've gotten a lot of jokes from my colleagues about it, a lot of teasing."

The magazine approached UCSF's press office for potential candidates. Staffers in that office were familiar with Geschwind's sense of humor and suggested him. "They initially called up my boss to ask if he thought I would be interested," says Geschwind. "He said, 'Forget Mike. What about me?' But my boss is married and has children, and he's a little bit older. They told him, 'Nah, you have to be younger and single.'"

Geschwind thinks the wording of the article made him seem rather arrogant. "My friends read it and thought it made me look 'not like a nice person.' The advantage of that is that it kept the number of people contacting me down to a minimum."

Nevertheless, amorous women have sent him e-mails, letters, and phone calls

both at home and at work. When asked if any were good prospects, he said, "The most likely woman was somebody who was very nice, but she was a little bit old. She was 92. If she were just a little bit younger and I were just a little bit older, who knows?"

Perhaps 39-year-old Geschwind should meet **Betty Garvey**, a dynamo who turns a mere 75 on March 7. Garvey, a former 24th Street resident, directed the seniors' program at St. Philip's Church from 1973 until 1982. That's when she started working full-time as director of the Diamond Senior Center, which she founded in 1980.

The center serves seniors from across the city, but most members hail from the Castro and Noe Valley. On Jan. 31, with a touch of pomp and circumstance, the Diamond Senior Center was renamed the Betty Garvey Diamond Senior Center. Among those who packed the dedication ceremony, in addition to all of the center's regulars, were San Francisco District Attorney **Terence Hallinan**, State Board of Equalization member **Carole Migden**, District 8 Supervisor **Bevan Dufty**, and **Nick Lederer**, executive director of Golden Gate Senior Services. President Pro Tem of the California State Senate **John Burton** could not attend, but his letter of congratulations was read aloud.

"She's in a wheelchair now, but still going strong and working every day," says Garvey's daughter **Claudia Curran**,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25

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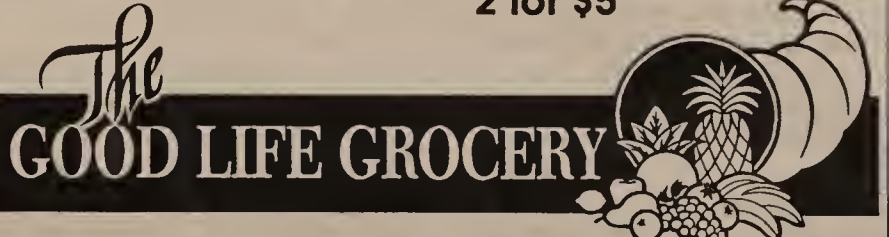
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This 'n' That

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

who volunteers at the senior center. "She's an inspiration for all of us. She's had cancer for over one-and-a-half years, and through all her chemo treatments she was back at work within a day or two, and she'd work at least five hours. The only time she took time off was four weeks right after radiation."

The Betty Garvey Diamond Senior Center is on Diamond Street near 18th Street. It provides a lunch program, plus a wide range of activities including book clubs, walking groups, cultural events, and world travel opportunities.

One upcoming cultural event involves two locals. **Padma Moyer**, who has practiced psychotherapy from her 24th Street office for 16 years, and 10-year neighborhood resident **Hal Savage** have landed the roles of Edna and Harry in the Class Act Theatre Company's production of Edward Albee's play *A Delicate Balance*. They and about 10 other former students of Bay Area acting coach **Jean Shelton** formed the company two years ago.

"This is our fourth production," says Savage. "I think we've become a family during this one, because rehearsals have been long, and the play is long. We've also come to appreciate Albee's lyrical language."

Like Savage, Moyer finds that being part of a close-knit theater company is complex and rich. She also finds that her day job informs her acting. "In doing therapy, I deal with people's most profound desires, blocks, longings, and yearnings.



Noe Valley actors Padma Moyer (far left) and Hal Savage (far right) join Margel Kaufman, Barbara Michelson, and Michael Medici in a Class Act Theatre revival of Edward Albee's award-winning play *A Delicate Balance*.

Photo by James Sanders

So does good playwriting or good literature. It all addresses the deepest aspects of what it is to be alive," she says.

In Albee's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, written in 1966, Edna and Harry make a visit to their best friends, a middle-aged couple sharing their home with an alcoholic sister and a daughter whose fourth marriage has failed. It is their visit that upsets the "delicate balance."

A Delicate Balance opens March 7 and runs through March 29 at the Phoenix Theater, 414 Mason Street between Geary and Post. The box office number is 364-3037.

Now for an update on **Alan Deutschman**, who was featured in our October 2000 issue when his first book, *The Second Coming of Steve Jobs*, was published by Broadway Books. Deutschman defected to Cole Valley in July, but he says

he wrote his second nonfiction book, *A Tale of Two Valleys: Wine, Wealth, and the Battle for the Good Life in Napa and Sonoma*, while residing in his former digs on Dolores Street. It is due to be published by Broadway Books on April 8. Here's the scoop on how this book came into being:

"I had been writing about Silicon Valley for years, and I noticed that people I knew from there were buying fabulous weekend houses in the wine country. I realized their villas were vacant during the weekdays. I saw my chance to become a permanent housesitter living in these wonderful houses with their lap pools and tennis courts, hot tubs and gardens. I had this idea that I could be the Kato Kaelin of the wine country," Deutschman jokes. (Think O.J. trial.)

He started splitting time between Noe Valley and the wine country and found a fierce controversy brewing—a clash be-

tween two valleys: Napa and Sonoma.

"Napa represented elitism, wealth, and status. It had the best restaurants, but you couldn't get a reservation. It was reputed to have the best wine, but you couldn't buy a bottle because it wasn't sold in the stores. Sonoma had been a refuge for individualistic people who wanted to live the good life on the cheap. You had a lot of writers and artists who had converted old barns and made them into their studios. There was a strong sense of neighborhood and community that attracted me the same way Noe Valley did. There were poets and Buddhists and cheese makers and small organic farmers—a lot of smart, creative people who found that the type of people from Napa were trying to take over Sonoma," he says.

The controversy heats up when a developer tries to construct a luxury hotel on a virgin hillside behind the town of Sonoma. Does the developer succeed? You'll have to read the book to find out. For more about Deutschman's work, go to www.alandeutschman.com.

Will this column entertain you next month? Send us your tales, and we'll see. Charm us with news of your babies and toddlers, shower us with your smashing successes, inspire us with your innovations, tell us about your academic honors, athletic achievements, engagements, weddings, professional awards, book publishing parties, art show openings, literary salons, and any other good news worth sharing with your neighbors.

E-mail leads to thisnthat@noevalleyvoice.com, mail them to the Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, or leave a phone message at 821-3324. ☐



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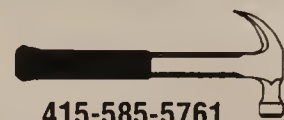
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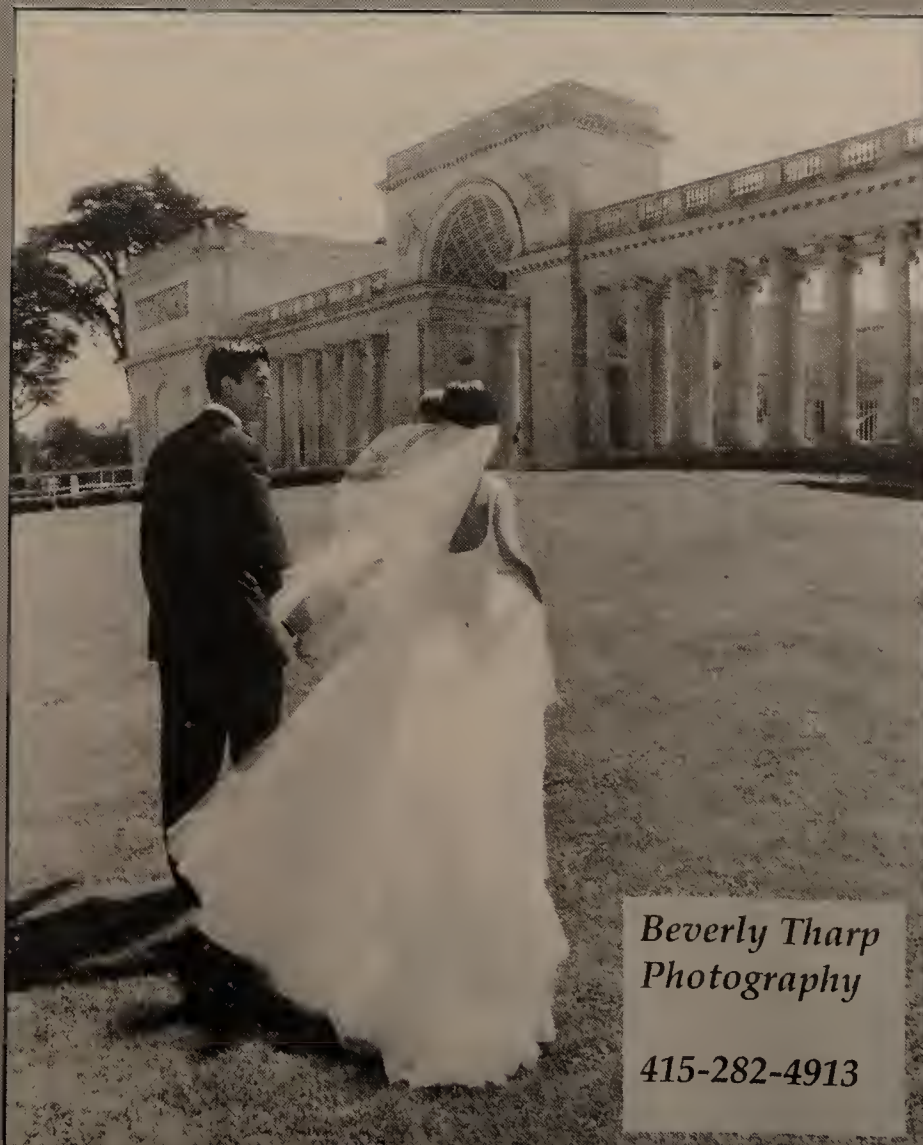


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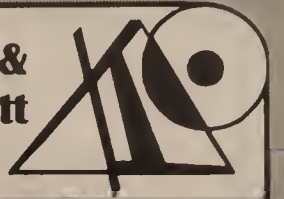
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The Joys and Perils of the Motor Car

Writer and illustrator Florence Holub chronicles her driving ambition in this personal essay, reprinted from the June 1990 Voice.

The first automobile in my life was the Model T Ford. It was the car that carried our family from rural Idaho to Noe Valley in the early 1920s, when I was about 5 years old. The Model T had a front seat for my mother and father, and a back seat wide enough for my two brothers and me.

Like most early cars, it originally sported a canvas top, but that didn't survive the winters in Idaho, so my father built and laminated a wooden top, then covered it with black canvas. This withstood the weather but was hard on our heads, for whenever the car hit a bump on the road (and there were many), we three children would fly up into the air, smacking the roof with the tops of our heads.

The Model T was one of those noisy motor cars that chugged and sputtered—sometimes with exploding sounds—and occasionally stopped dead in its tracks. My father would have to get out, go to the front with the cranking tool that fit into the crankshaft below the radiator, and with a vigorous rowing gesture, turn it until the motor started again.

The old Ford managed most of the San Francisco hills easily, but 23rd Street between Church and Chattanooga (where we lived temporarily with Uncle Ed) was too steep to go up in forward gear. My father would turn the car around, put it in reverse, step on the gas, and zoom up the hill backward to Uncle Ed's house.

On weekends, we would be off to new and exciting places, like the concessions at the beach, Golden Gate Park, and the zoo. We went swimming at Sutro Baths and Fleishhacker Pool, and ran into the surf at Ocean Beach.

We vacationed in Santa Cruz, at the Russian River, and in the Big Basin redwoods—back when these spots were relatively uncrowded—and that indestructible old car took us everywhere. Eventually, other cars replaced it, but they were never as durable, and none lasted so long.

When my older brother grew up and went to work, his first major investment was a Model A coupe, and he was so proud of it that he allowed me to share his happiness behind the steering wheel. Actually, that first time in the driver's seat, I froze in terror when a telephone pole loomed up in front of me, so he had to grab the wheel. We decided I wasn't ready for such a responsibility. Girls didn't drive anyway, and boys were only allowed to use the family car on special occasions, so everyone mostly took the streetcars or walked a lot.

When Leo and I got married in 1941, we both had jobs but little else, and our dream was to own a wood-paneled station wagon. Six years and two sons later, we purchased a new maroon Ford V-8 station wagon with natural wood sides. That car has since carried us to many exciting places.

Once when we were driving across the state of Nevada, Leo let me take his seat behind the wheel. The road was

very straight, but when my attention strayed to a band of Native Americans moving across the desert on horses, the car suddenly headed for a ravine beyond the soft shoulder. Leo grabbed the steering wheel, and I realized that, like the other time, I wasn't ready. We still own that station wagon, but now it is up on blocks, a little too old for heavy use, yet cherished nonetheless.

By the time I was 40, all of my lady friends were driving, and since Leo and I had chosen to live on the steep 21st Street hill, it seemed a good idea for me to take a few driving lessons to determine, once and for all, if driving was even a possibility. On the first day behind the wheel, the teacher told me to turn right, and I turned left, to which he did a slow take and said, "You don't know your right hand from your left!" Any optimism I had held was squelched with that remark, so the lessons were terminated.

Ten years later when I was 50, my father, who could no longer drive, was having great difficulty walking and needed help, so I decided to give driving another try. Responding to an

advertisement in the *San Francisco Progress* newspaper, I enrolled in a four-week driving course conducted at the YMCA by the National Driving School. We were lectured on everything we were supposed to do, and also on everything we were not, and advised to take a few on-the-road lessons with a seasoned instructor. Then our

teacher (who happened to be the owner of the school) stated that the school had two used autos for sale and one of them was a beauty.

Having no car of my own and not wishing to demolish my husband's, but needing a disposable car with a lot of protective steel, I went to assess the autos that were for sale. Like the man said, one was a beauty: a 1968 Mustang with beautiful lines, going for a mere \$750. The car had traveled over 100,000 miles, but it sported my favorite colors—white with deep-red upholstery. It was love at first sight. I didn't ask to look under the hood, or even if it had a motor. I just said, "If you can teach me to drive, I'll take it." Confident that he or his instructors could, the owner of the school agreed to hold the Mustang for me, never dreaming how long the wait would be.

Twice a week, month after month, my instructor, Mr. Rowbottom, came to our house to pick me up. His car had dual controls, but I had to start it myself and drive down our steep hill, then return to park it at the end of the lesson. Early in the course of my lessons, I confessed that I was somewhat erratic and didn't know my right hand from my left, to which he responded without concern, "Neither do I!" That helped me overcome one hang-up, but I was a slow, timid learner, and after three months Mr. Rowbottom said, "If you were a teenager, you would be taking your driving test now. You have to become more aggressive."

One month later, he insisted that it was time for the test—a notion I strongly disputed. And so the weeks went on, with Mr. Rowbottom saying I should go for it,

and his student pleading, "I'm not ready!"

One particular day, however, upon returning home from a lesson (after five months of instruction), we encountered my good neighbor Janet, who loves to say outrageous things. "Mr. Rowbottom," she said tartly, "are you having an affair with Mrs. Holub?"

My teacher, who was a happily married man and already impatient with his student, turned to me and said firmly, "That does it. You take your test tomorrow!"

It was a Saturday morning when he accompanied me to the Department of Motor Vehicles, assuring me that I would pass. I again denied any such thing, but he was right: I got my license without a bit of trouble. Mr. Rowbottom then drove me to the school where the Mustang awaited me. Still, before I got into my car, I begged, "One more thing, please lead me home and I promise to never bother you again." He protested, but then got into his car, turned in front of me, and began to shepherd me home on Oak Street. When we got to Divisadero, where I had to turn right, he sped straight ahead, on his way to his Marin County home, and I was forced to go it alone, which I did, miraculously, with my fenders intact.

My Mustang has given me 16 years of satisfaction. I have not only been able to transport my father to all of the places that an elderly man must go—plus handle the weekly grocery shopping without having to depend on others—but I've also acquired a deep sense of pride at possessing such a fine old automobile.

It turns out that the \$750 I paid for this classic car is the next-to-best investment I have ever made. The best investment was in the driving lessons that allowed me to drive my motor car without imperiling either myself or the good citizens of Noe Valley.



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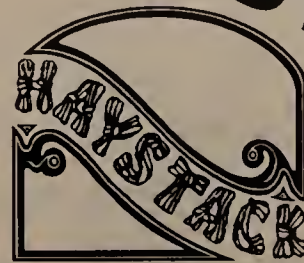
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FEB. 27–MARCH 27: The Mission YMCA offers HIP-HOP AEROBICS for adults, Thursdays from 6:15–7:15 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Register at 452-7574.

FEB. 28; MARCH 1, 2, 7, 8 & 9: The Bethany Theatre Project presents Stephen Sondheim's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Fri. and Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 2 pm. 1268 Sanchez St. 701-7011.

MARCH 1: Catherine Egan leads a WORKSHOP, "The Controversial History of Irish American Whiteness." 10 am–3 pm. New College of California, 777 Valencia St. 437-3403, ext. 427.

MARCH 1: LAPSITS for babies, toddlers, and their parents feature songs, stories, and finger plays. 10:30 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

MARCH 1: Laura McHale Holland teaches a class, "STORYTELLING for Parents: Make a Story Come Alive!" 2–5 pm. Natural Resources, 1307 Castro St. 550-2611.

MARCH 1: ROCKET DOG RESCUE'S "Bark for Art" show features music, food, and a silent auction to benefit rescue dogs. 6:30–10:30 pm. Terra Mia Studios, 1314 Castro St. 642-4786.

MARCH 1: GAMES NIGHT at the Noe Valley Ministry offers a chance to play board and parlor games, including Scrabble, charades, and Twister. 7–10 pm. 1021 Sanchez St. 285-7706 or 282-2317.

MARCH 1: A ZYDECO DANCE, Cajun refreshments, and a silent auction featuring Louisiana products benefits the Network for Elders. 7 pm–midnight. Bayview Opera House, 4705 Third St. 647-5353.

MARCH 1–29: Neighborhood artist JOSEPH SUAREZ exhibits "The Same Image Drawn on Paper and Clay Tiles—Same But Different" at the Noe Valley Library. 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

MARCH 2: A MARDI GRAS celebration and worship service at Bethany Church is followed by a Cajun brunch. 11 am. 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

MARCH 3: ODD MONDAYS at the Noe Valley Ministry features a lecture and reading by poet and KABBALA scholar Daniel Y. Harris. 7 pm. 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

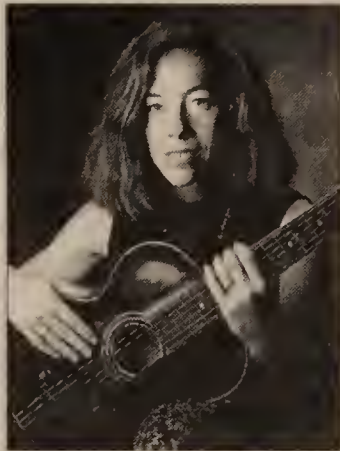
MARCH 3–7: The PRINCESS PROJECT needs donations of new and nearly new formal dresses and accessories for a dress giveaway to needy students on March 15 and 16. Bring items to Korn Ferry International, 1 Embarcadero Center, Suite 2101, weekdays, 8:30 am to 5:30 pm. Sian Parry, 318-4155.

MARCH 3–28: LIVING T'AI CHI of Noe Valley offers classes in meditation and Qigong, taught by Chris Sequeira. Mon. and Tues., 6–7:30 pm, at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.; Wed. and Fri., 10:15 am–noon, at Douglass Park, 27th and Douglass. 415-773-8185 or 650-756-6857.

MARCH 4: The HISPANIC SCHOLARSHIP Fund hosts a town meeting to inform Latino students about financial aid opportunities and the college application process. 6:30–8:30 pm. Mission High School, 3750 18th St. 808-2353.

MARCH 4, 11 & 25: Preschool STORY TIME, a read-aloud program for children 3 to 5, begins at 10 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

MARCH 4–APRIL 11: Artists Phyllis Rockne and Patricia Westergard exhibit



Claudia Schmidt sings her own songs March 15 at the Noe Valley Music Series.

DRAWINGS AND PAINTINGS in "Artifacts of Life." Mon.–Sat., 9 am–5 pm; reception March 8, 2–4 pm. Gallery Sanchez at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

MARCH 5: The Golden Gate Park Safety Committee hosts an EVENING RUN in the park, with 2.5- to 5-mile options, starting and finishing at Kezar Stadium. 553-1984.

MARCH 5: Other Minds hosts NED ROREM in conversation at 7 pm; in concert, 8 pm. 333 Valencia St. 273-1659.

MARCH 5, 12, 19 & 26: Professional cartoonist Z-Man teaches a Wednesday class in CARTOONING for teens ages 11 to 16. 4–5:30 pm. Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St. Preregistration required; call 355-2800.

MARCH 5–26: A drop-in MOTHERS AND BABIES group meets Wednesdays from 10:30 am to noon. Natural Resources, 1307 Castro St. 550-2611.

MARCH 6: The Children's Psychological Health Center offers free PRESCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH and developmental screenings from 11 am to 2 pm. Cornerstone Therapeutic Preschool, 2024 Divisadero St. 474-1955.

MARCH 6: The SPCA's annual Bark and Whine Ball, "MARDI PAWS," features food, music, and dancing for dogs and their owners to benefit the Cinderella Fund. 7–10:30 pm. S.F. Gift Center, 888 Brannan St. 522-3535.

MARCH 6: Editor Cleo Woelfle-Erskine talks about *URBAN WILDS: Gardeners' Stories of the Struggle for Land and Justice*. 7:30 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

MARCH 6–29: The Class Act Theatre Company performs Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance*, featuring Noe Valley residents Padma Moyer and Hal Savage. Thurs.–Sat., 7:30 pm; Sun., 5 pm. Phoenix Theater, 414 Mason St. 364-3037.

MARCH 8: An anti-war march and WOMEN'S STRIKE, coordinated by the International Wages for Housework Campaign, meets at noon at Bechtel Corp., 50 Beale St., and ends at Union Square. For information, call 626-4114.

MARCH 8: The Friends of Glen Canyon Park leads a SPRING FLOWER WALK. Meet at 10 am at the Glen Park Rec Center, Elk and Chenery. 584-8576.

MARCH 8: The S.F. Bar Association Volunteer Legal Services offers a LEGAL ADVICE and referral clinic. Sign up from 10:30 am to noon for an appointment by 2 pm. Main Library, Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin St. 989-1616.

MARCH 8: Abadía-Capoeira SF hosts a benefit auction, raffle, and buffet for the Ray Project to encourage Brazilian cul-

tural arts for youth. 7 pm. Brazilian Cultural Center, 3221 22nd St. 206-0650.

MARCH 8: Blame Sally and Magic City Chamber of Commerce perform a CONCERT at 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

MARCH 8 & 9: The seventh annual City Lights Ball, a ballroom and Latin DANCE COMPETITION, will also include audience dancing. Sat., 10 am–4 pm and 6–11 pm; Sun., 10 am–4 pm. The Regency Center, 1300 Van Ness Ave. 681-9083.

MARCH 9: Gay and Lesbian Sierrans host a HIKE on Mt. Davidson, followed by a walk through Edgehill and lunch in West Portal. Meet at Tower Market, Portola at Teresita, at 10:30 am. 586-4114.

MARCH 9: A VEGETARIAN COOKING class at the Integral Yoga Institute features nutritious, simple recipes. 11 am–2 pm. 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

MARCH 9: Winners of the international Soul-Making Literary Competition, sponsored by the National League of American Pen Women, will read excerpts from their winning POETRY AND PROSE, starting at 1 pm. Main Library, Civic Center. 650-756-5279.

MARCH 9: The preliminary round of the seventh annual Youth Speaks Teen POETRY SLAM begins at 2 pm. Intersection for the Arts, 446 Valencia St. 626-2787.

MARCH 9: PFLAG hosts a fundraiser for the group's educational conferences, with a raffle and refreshments. 3–6 pm. Eagle Tavern, 398 12th St. 921-8850.

MARCH 9: Guitar soloist David Tannenbaum performs in concert with the

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CALENDAR



Falsafi Duo and the S.F. Conservatory Guitar Ensemble at Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC. 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 648-5236.

MARCH 9: Clarinet player CAREY BELL, pianist Bryndon Hassman, and cellist Emil Milland play the music of Saint-Saens, Bernstein, and Lutoslawski. 5 pm. Holy Innocents Episcopal Church, 455 Fair Oaks St. 824-5142.

MARCH 12: The BUBBLE LADY will "blow your mind" with her magic for all ages. 4 pm. Mission Library, 300 Bartlett St. 355-2800.

MARCH 12: The KITTEN SEASON orientation program at Pets Unlimited trains volunteers to care for very young motherless felines. 7-8:30 pm. 2343 Fillmore St. 563-6702, ext. 198.

MARCH 15: An IRISH American Literary Festival features readings on "Ireland and the Caribbean" from 12:30 to 2 pm; "Irish Women's Voices" from 2:30 to 4:30 pm. Main Library, Koret Auditorium, 100 Larkin St. 557-4277.

MARCH 15: Alvarado Elementary School's "Not So SILENT AUCTION" also features food and live music. 7-11 pm. Fort Mason Conference Center, Buchanan and Marina Blvd. 206-9400.

MARCH 15: Singer/songwriter CLAUDIA SCHMIDT performs at 8:15 pm at the Noe Valley Music Series. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

MARCH 17: Celebrate ST. PATRICK'S DAY at the Dubliner bar with Irish dancers, bagpipers, and free corned beef and cabbage. Noon-2 a.m. 3838 24th St. 826-2279.

MARCH 17: A workshop "To Be Easyful, Peaceful, and Useful" explores the

power of thought in shaping one's attitudes. 6-7:30 pm. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St. 821-1117.

MARCH 17: ODD MONDAYS at the Noe Valley Ministry features a participatory MUSICAL EVENING led by Ramon Sender, including a Gruntling Marathon. 7 pm. 1021 Sanchez St. 282-2317.

MARCH 18: FILMS for preschoolers will be shown at 10 and 11 am. Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St. 695-5095.

MARCH 18-APRIL 8: The Mission YMCA offers YOGA for children ages 4 to 6 from 8 to 8:45 am on Tuesdays, and cooking for 7- to 10-year-olds from 3 to 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Register at 452-7574.

MARCH 19: Tom Radulovich and Jeannene Przyblyski discuss land use and housing in Noe Valley at the Noe Valley DEMOCRATIC CLUB meeting. 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 285-6043.

MARCH 19: The DRAMA MAMAS perform monologues and short skits about parenting. 8 pm. The Marsh, 1062 Valencia St. 826-5750.

MARCH 20: Diana Burgess Fuller, co-editor of *ART/WOMEN/CALIFORNIA 1950-2000*, gives a slide lecture in celebration of Women's History Month. 9:30-11 am. City College, Rosenberg Library, Room 305. 239-3580.

MARCH 20-30: Ink Boat performs "Tasting an Ocean," Thurs.-Sun. at 8 pm, and offers a BUTOH DANCE class on Sun., March 30, from 1 to 4 pm. Noh Space, 2840 Mariposa St. 621-7978.

MARCH 20-APRIL 10: The YMCA offers INDOOR GOLF for kids 5 to 11. Thurs., 3:15-4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Register at 452-7574.



Phyllis Rockne's "Gifts" and other "Artifacts of Life" will be shown along with work by Patricia Westergard at Gallery Sanchez in the Noe Valley Ministry March 4 through April 11.

MARCH 21-MAY 16: Katherine Baird leads a RHYTHM KIDS class on Fridays, 10:40-11:20 am. Natural Resources, 1307 Castro St. 550-2611.

MARCH 22: The San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) offers a workshop on "Integrated PEST MANAGEMENT." 10 am-1 pm. Garden for the Environment, 7th Ave. at Lawton. Preregister at 255-4493.

MARCH 22: The Older Women's League (OWL) sponsors a panel discussion, "Women Who Made a Difference in World Politics." 10:30 am-12:15 pm. Call 989-4422 for location.

MARCH 22: The CYPRESS STRING QUARTET performs "Call and Response," with the music of Debussy, Ravel, and Higdon. 11 am. Community Music Center, 544 Capp St. 647-6015.

MARCH 22 & 23: The San Francisco QUILTERS' GUILD exhibits "Symphony of Color" at the Concourse Exhibition Center. Sat., 10 am-5 pm; Sun., 10 am-4 pm. 635 8th St.

MARCH 22 & 30: The Grammy-winning group CHANTICLEER performs "My Beloved Spake," English Baroque music by Purcell and Lawes. March 22 at 8 pm; March 30 at 7 pm. Mission Dolores, 3321 16th St. 392-4400.

MARCH 23: A Women's History BIKE TOUR, sponsored by S.F.'s Bicycle Coalition, begins at the Women's Building. Noon-3 pm. 3543 18th St. 431-BIKE.

MARCH 23: "MUSIC OF THE HOLOCAUST," a multimedia performance and lecture about the arts during the Third Reich, includes anonymous piano pieces discovered in Auschwitz. 4 pm. Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 290 Dolores St. 861-6932.

MARCH 25: New College of California School of Law offers a workshop, "How to Collect a SMALL CLAIMS COURT Judgment." 10 am. Civic Center Courthouse, 400 McAllister St. 241-1300.

MARCH 26: BICYCLE ROUTES and safety are the topics at a community workshop sponsored by the S.F. Bicycle Coalition, DPT, and the S.F. County Transportation Authority. 6:30-8 pm. Women's Building, 3543 18th St. 431-BIKE, ext. 27, or 585-BIKE.

MARCH 27: A BOOK DISCUSSION group considers Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*. 4 pm. Bernal Heights Library, 500 Cortland St. 695-5160.

MARCH 27: Donna Ewald Huggins shows memorabilia from the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915 at the monthly meeting of the San Fran-

April, Come She Will

So hurry and send in your calendar items. The next edition of the *Voice* will be distributed on or before April 1, 2003. Please make sure we hear about your event by **March 15**. Our address is *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or you may zip an e-mail to zabarska@aol.com.

cisco HISTORY ASSOCIATION. 7 pm. Mission Dolores School Auditorium, 16th and Church. 750-9986.

MARCH 27: UPPER NOE NEIGHBORS meets at 7:30 pm at the Upper Noe Rec Center. Day and Sanchez. 285-0473.

MARCH 28: The FIRST BIRTHDAY of the LGBT Center is celebrated with music, dance, and comedy shows. 8 and 10 pm. 1800 Market St. 865-5633.

MARCH 29: A Corona Heights HABITAT RESTORATION with the Gay and Lesbian Sierrans removes non-native plants; bring work gloves, snacks, and water. Meet 10 am at the Randall Museum, 199 Museum Way. 334-2134.

MARCH 29: The JAMESTOWN JAM 2003 features funk and disco revue Divalicious and deejay Asti Spumanti to benefit the Jamestown Community Center. 9 pm-2 am. Broadway Studios, 435 Broadway, 647-4709.

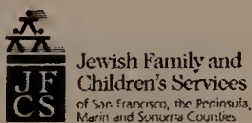
MARCH 30: CARNAVAL San Francisco's King and Queen competition will be held at Rocapulco Supper Club at 7 pm. 3140 Mission St. 920-0125.

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Readers Away and Readers at Home

Faithful readers of the *Noe Valley Voice* are not shy. They'll show their loyalty anywhere. Whether across the ocean or on 24th Street, Noe Valleyans are eager to unfold their neighborhood tabloid and pose. We thank all of you who have joined our parade so far. And to those who haven't communicated with us yet, we hope you will soon.

We know that you ought to be in pictures, and we make it easy to join our neighborhood photo gallery. Just e-mail your image to jack@noevalley-voice.com, or mail a photo print to the *Noe Valley Voice*, Attn: Readers, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Make sure to write legibly and include an SASE if you want your photo returned. Thanks. We'll see you next issue.



Glen Stroud, manager of Ritz Camera on 24th Street, had a jolly time reading the *Voice* in December.

Photo by Leo Holub



Perched high in the gothic temple at Stowe Gardens in Buckinghamshire, England, *Voice* contributors Janis Cooke Newman and Ken Newman check the printing of their work.

Photo by Alex Newman



A long way from Noe Valley, Tom Kramer e-mailed this image of two pleased readers on Australia's coast.



Kathleen Zucchi takes a break with her favorite local paper at the Diamond Street office of Edward Jones Investment Services she manages.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

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SHORT TAKES

A City Built for Bicycles

Whether you ride a bike or not, you're invited to take a spin through a city-sponsored planning workshop, to be held Wednesday, March 26, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the San Francisco Women's Building. Workshop participants will focus on ways to improve bicycle routes, safety, and access in Districts 8 and 9. That includes Noe Valley and the surrounding Mission, Glen Park, Bernal Heights, Twin Peaks, and the Castro neighborhood.

Representatives from the city's Department of Parking and Traffic, the San Francisco County Transportation Authority, and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition will be on hand to present plans for new bike lanes, bike parking facilities, and other ideas for enhancing bicycle safety, education, and law enforcement.

"This is a huge planning event and a way for residents of Noe Valley to help shape their streets," says Amy Panella, community outreach coordinator for the Bicycle Coalition.

The Women's Building is located at 3543 18th Street, near Valencia Street. For more information call 431-2453, ext. 27, or 585-2453; or visit www.bicycle.sf.gov.org or www.sfbike.org.

Something for Everyone, A Comedy This Month

The Bethany Theatre Project has mounted its fifth and largest production, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Directed by Dexter Fidler, the show opened Friday, Feb. 28, and runs through Sunday, March 9.

A musical with lyrics and music by Stephen Sondheim, *Forum* sent Broadway audiences into paroxysms of mirth in 1962. The plot revolves around Pseudolus, a slave in ancient Rome, who will do almost anything to gain his freedom. Zero Mostel played Pseudolus on Broadway and in a subsequent 1966 film, but in Bethany's production Julie Ponsford, a woman, takes the lead.

Also of note, three neighborhood residents are in the cast: Kathryn Guta plays Domina, Tim Mayer plays Erronious, and Antoine Zapata plays a eunuch.

"This is the first production for which we have designed all of our own costumes instead of borrowing or buying. We also have a small orchestra," says Bethany's artistic director (and music director for this show) John Lehrack. "The cast and crew are totally gung ho, and they don't hesitate to put in extra hours and work

hard at promoting the show."

Tickets, priced at \$15 general admission and \$12 for students and seniors, are available at the door. However, reservations are recommended. Call 701-7011 or e-mail bethanytheatre@aol.com to reserve yours.

Showtime is 8 p.m. on (Feb. 28) March 1, 6, 7, and 8; and 2 p.m. on March 2 and 9. Seating is open. For more details, visit www.bethanytheatre.homestead.com.

The Bethany Theatre Project is hosted by Bethany United Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez Street at Clipper Street.

Slugs of Spring

How do you get the good insects to stay in and the bad ones to stay out of your garden? Is installing an irrigation system something a person can really do without professional help? What sort of wildlife would help a Noe Valley garden thrive?

The San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) will provide answers to these and other questions at two free workshops held this month at the Garden for the Environment, on Seventh Avenue near Lawton Street.

On Saturday, March 22, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., you can learn the basics of integrated pest management, focusing on the least toxic ways to deal with pests and diseases. You will also learn to turn your garden into an ecosystem that attracts wildlife and a diversity of beneficial insects that help prevent pest problems.

The following Saturday, March 29, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., is all about installing your own irrigation system. Members of SLUG and the Urban Farmer Store will reveal the most effective ways to deliver water to your landscape with minimal waste.

Preregistration is required for both programs. Call 255-4493 to save your spot.

Meanwhile, SLUG is also offering an introduction to the art of urban beekeeping, on Saturdays, March 8 and 15, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The workshops will cover the biology of honeybees, beekeeping equipment, hive management, honey production, and bee diseases. Visits to working hives for hands-on experience will also be included.

The class costs \$50 for members of SLUG or the San Francisco Beekeeping Association. Non-members pay \$65. Preregistration at 255-4339 is required.

For more information about these and other programs offered by SLUG, contact Stacey Parker at 285-7584.

One Lively Museum

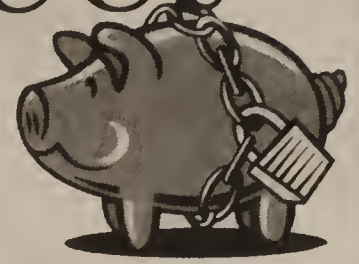
The Josephine Randall Junior Museum continues its perennially popular "Saturdays Are Special" activities and one-of-a-kind workshops this year. Offerings include hands-on art and science ex-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37



Actors Julie Ponsford, Lisa Clark, Sabrina Simone, and Jaime Kronick rehearse the Stephen Sondheim musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, playing at the Bethany Theatre Project Feb. 28 through March 9. Photo by Lisa Lennox

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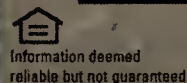


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SHORT TAKES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

periences that will appeal to toddlers up through adults.

Drop-in workshops in March are all about making things: March 8 participants will make masks for a fantasy Mardi Gras festival; on March 15, the task will be constructing triangle mobiles using sticks, wire, and other objects; the March 22 workshop will provide a chance to hew newspaper castles using everyday recyclables and basic physics; March 29 participants will learn to use a stylus to design copper-foil frames for favorite photos. Workshops run from 1 to 4 p.m., and the fee per person is \$3.

Also, the opening reception for "Reflections 2003: Signs of Courage" will be March 15, at 1 p.m. "Reflections" is an exhibition of photography, drawing, and painting by San Francisco public school students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The show will be up until April 12, during regular museum hours, Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Another coming attraction is "Animal Story Hour" with children's book author and illustrator Barbara Bash. On Saturday, March 29, at 11:30 a.m., Bash will read from two of her many books on natural history written especially for children: *Desert Giants*, about the saguaro cactus in the Sonoran desert, and *Ancient Ones*, about the old-growth forests of the Pacific Northwest. This event is free.

The Randall has many other free and low-cost events and exhibits including live animal feedings, family ceramics, and the Golden Gate Model Railroad. Children under 8 must be accompanied by an adult.

The museum is at 199 Museum Way, off Roosevelt Street. For more information, and to find out what spring-break classes and summer camps the Randall has in store this year, call 554-9600 or visit www.randallmuseum.org.

Volunteer at the Nightline

A training begins March 6 for new volunteers at the city's AIDS/HIV Nightline. A program of San Francisco Suicide Prevention, the Nightline provides help to those dealing with HIV, AIDS, and hepatitis C, be they patients, caregivers, family, or friends. Volunteers are needed to answer phones every night from 5 p.m. to 5 a.m.

"We are a national line and we talk to an unbelievable variety of people, representing all types of social, cultural, ethnic, economic, and geographic backgrounds," says Rolph Shanabruch, Nightline program director. "It can be very inspirational to better understand someone who is living a lifestyle that may be totally unfamiliar to the volunteer."

Training includes an overview of counseling styles and crisis-intervention techniques. "We don't attempt to provide advice or take responsibility for solving callers' problems. We try to be understanding, non-judgmental listeners, to allow people a safe place to vent their thoughts and feelings," says Shanabruch.

For more information or to set up an interview, call 984-1902.

How to Make a Legacy

If you love the arts and are intrigued by oral history, Legacy, a program of the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum, might be a good match for you. The museum is the largest archive of the performing arts in the United States west of the Mississippi.

In a presentation on Wednesday, March 5, from 6 to 7 p.m., program man-

ager Alyson Belcher will discuss the history and mission of Legacy, its volunteer opportunities, and its upcoming five-day summer training workshop. The program was founded in 1988 to record and preserve the performances as well as personal recollections of individual artists. The collection covers the complete spectrum of performing arts—from modern dance and ballet to vaudeville and musical theater.

"We train people in all the skills they need to do an oral-history interview," says Jeff Friedman, Legacy's director. "That includes the actual interview skills, as well as the editing skills for creating transcripts that researchers will eventually use in the library. People come from all over the country for this training, so we specifically reserve a certain number of discounted places in the workshop for our local volunteers." (The full fee is expected to be about \$400.)

This summer's eighth-annual training will be from July 9 to 13. Both the introductory presentation and the training will take place at the museum, located on the fourth floor of the Veterans Building, 401 Van Ness Avenue. For more information, call 255-4800 or go to www.sfpalm.org.

Say Hi to Sangha

Monday evenings have gone Buddhist in the Castro. This is due to a new series at the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC), titled "Q-Sangha, Mindful Mondays at MCC." "Q" stands for the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) community and its allies. "Sangha" is a Buddhist term for spiritual community.

Rev. G. Penny Nixon says the new series is historic for two reasons. "First, a Christian church is establishing this Buddhist ministry, and second, this new Buddhist ministry is 'queer.' We recognize and celebrate diverse spiritualities and traditions. As we expand to include the practice of mindfulness, we hope to promote peace and bring new healing into the world. All are welcome."

The weekly services will be led by MCC's new minister of Buddhist spirituality, Ji-Sing Norman Eng, a student of the Vietnamese Zen Buddhist master Thich Nhat Hanh. A spiritual counselor, artist, and musician, Eng has collaborated with Bay Area spiritual teachers, including Matthew Fox and Christian de la Huerta, in leading retreats and rituals for a variety of churches and groups.

Services will incorporate tai chi, chanting, meditation, Buddhist scripture readings, Dharma teachings, mindful movement, and sharing.

Mindful Mondays run two hours, 7 to 9 p.m., at the MCC church, located at 150 Eureka Street. There is no admission charge, but voluntary contributions are welcome. For more information visit www.mccsf.org.

This month's Short Takes were written by Laura McHale Holland. All phone numbers are in the 415 area code, unless otherwise specified.

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STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular *Voice* feature profiling new shops, restaurants, and other walk-in businesses in and around the neighborhood. This month we introduce a Vietnamese restaurant with French influences, and a portrait photographer on upper 24th Street.

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Last May, a Vietnamese restaurant called Tao Café quietly landed in the space once occupied by the Flying Saucer restaurant. "It was a very soft opening," says chef-owner Thuy Nguyen, "because I had to do it all by myself! Not even my husband had time to help."

But for Nguyen it was the realization of a dream: to open a San Francisco restaurant serving her personal brand of *cuisine vietnamienne*. "My cuisine is authentic Vietnamese, cooked and prepared the French way," she says.

The "authentic" part is true on both counts. Nguyen, 46, is a native of Vietnam who moved to France when she was 18. After a career as a doctor, she opened her first restaurant, also called Tao, in a section of Paris populated by artists and philosophers. (In Vietnamese, *tao* means "the way" or "the path" toward enlightenment.)

Nguyen met her husband Jeff Gould, an American living in Paris, at the first Tao. "He was one of my best customers," she says with a smile.

Three years ago, the couple moved to San Francisco with their two daughters, Vera, 9, and Emma, 6. In the fall of 2001, they signed a lease for the restaurant on the corner at 22nd and Guerrero streets.

Though the road to the opening of Tao was not easy—Nguyen's husband was busy with computer consulting work and she was busy caring for their two young girls—the path became a little smoother when world-renowned designer Aline Ho agreed to help Nguyen decorate the space.

Ho, who designed Don Johnson's Ghirardelli Square restaurant Ana Mandara, created a classically elegant décor, which harkens back to French colonial days in Saigon. Traditional Vietnamese ink paintings and framed chinaware adorn the "lemongrass-green" walls. (Lemongrass is an essential ingredient in Vietnamese cuisine, says Nguyen.) Bamboo chairs with cream-colored cushions flank round, dark-wood dining tables. A serene, romantic atmosphere extends throughout the restaurant's two dining rooms.

A self-described Taoist—a follower of Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu—Nguyen adheres to the Taoist code: "Seek simplicity in the complex." And that is her food philosophy as well: she mixes a variety of fresh ingredients from farmers' markets, but lets the flavors stand on their own. The result is a unique blend of Asian and French-Mediterranean tastes.

Nguyen changes her menu frequently, but among her current recommendations are the traditional *pho ho*, or beef soup (\$7.50); a "Vietnamese ratatouille" with Japanese eggplant (\$10); *ga xoi*, grilled

chicken breast in a ginger-sesame sauce (\$11.50); and *bun cha*, pork skewers served Hanoi-style ("the people's way"), in a bowl with noodles and greens (\$11). "I am also most proud of the grilled medium-rare Angus beefsteak" (\$15).

Tao offers several tofu dishes, including "Thai-style" tofu with sweet and sour shrimp, spiced with tamarind and galangal (\$8.50); and tofu in a clay pot, with wood-ear mushrooms, bean threads, and zucchini in a turmeric and coconut sauce, served with black jasmine rice (\$12).

Nguyen also suggests a Vietnamese family favorite called *bo bun*—warm salad with stir-fried beef over lettuce, peanuts, and rice vermicelli (\$9.50). She will make a vegetarian version if you wish.

The *mon nhâu* (appetizers) are "dishes for men who gather around with pints of beer or rice liquor in war or peace time." Options include "crunchy prawns, for two," in a fruit and vegetable sauce (\$13), and warm calamari salad (\$7.50).

The most expensive item at Tao is a dish for two called *ca/ga kho to*—a clay pot of white fish fillets seared in caramelized sauce, served with hot pep-



Noe Valley resident Thuy Nguyen invites you to sample her French-Vietnamese cuisine at Tao Café. Photos by Pamela Gerord

pers and steamed vegetables. The market price in February was \$28 (\$20 if made with chicken and pickled ginger).

In addition to all the standard beverages, Tao offers two beers from Vietnam: Hue and 33. And there is a long wine list, including French wines such as Meursault, a Burgundian chardonnay; Margaux, a red Bordeaux; and Châteauneuf-du-Pape, a red Côtes du Rhone.

After nine months, Nguyen says she is pleased with her clientele. Some customers converse in French with her, and some are friends she has made through her daughters' French-American School. She and her family recently moved from the Sunset to the corner of Sanchez and Elizabeth streets in Noe Valley.

"I can't believe we are here," she says. "I feel really good about this neighborhood, because it is just like the one we had in Paris. It must have been intuition that made us choose this place."

Tao Café is open every day from 5:30 to 10 p.m. during the week, and until 10:30 p.m. on weekends. The restaurant is available for private parties, offering a prix fixe menu (\$15 to \$20 per person). Tao also caters and offers takeout.

—Olivia Boler

LISA LEFKOWITZ PHOTOGRAPHY
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Lisa Lefkowitz, a portrait photographer whose photos have been displayed at galleries and museums around the country, has opened a studio on 24th Street.

"I'm excited to be doing business in Noe Valley," says the 26-year-old Bernal Heights resident. "Noe Valley is where I come to shop and hang out."

Lefkowitz opened her storefront next to Sherri King Accounting—in the block of 24th between Diamond and Douglass streets—in early February, following a move from Glen Park.

Lefkowitz does all kinds of photography—from advertising shoots to baby photos—but weddings and family portraits are a specialty. "Events like weddings allow me to be creative. I mix candid photographs, portraits, and still lifes to tell the story of the day." She also photographs corporate events, bar mitzvahs, anniversary parties, and other special occasions.

Lefkowitz says her fine arts approach and use of natural light distinguish her work. She has a degree in visual arts from Oberlin College in Ohio, and has furthered her studies in art and art history at the San Francisco Art Institute. "I think knowing the history of your medium is integral to being a good artist." She's been shooting professionally for six years.

Before opening her own business three years ago, Lefkowitz worked as a commercial photographer, including stints with *Moxie* and *Rolling Stone* magazines. She has also exhibited work at the Texas Fine Art Association; the Holter Museum in Helena, Mont.; the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento; and the Museum of Fine Arts at Florida State University. Several samples of her fine arts portraiture are in the permanent collection of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Artists Gallery, located at Fort Mason.

Her small Noe Valley storefront is a cozy place where clients can review her portfolio and discuss their specific needs. Shabby-chic furnishings add a homey touch (the Nifty Vintique shop on Church Street provided the furniture, which is also for sale). In addition, Lefkowitz exhibits her collection of vintage wedding photos and old cameras, featuring her father's Brownie Hawkeye from the 1950s.

Wedding packages are custom-priced.



Lisa Lefkowitz has a collection of vintage photos and old cameras at her new photography studio on 24th Street.

but couples should plan on spending \$3,500, she says. Children's portrait packages cost \$250 for a one-hour shoot on location; family portraits are \$375. "I usually ask the family to pick a playground, backyard, or other place where they will be comfortable. Douglass Park would be great," she says.

Lefkowitz encourages parents to bring favorite toys or blankets. "Kids are so spontaneous. You can't pose them," she says. "It's really exciting to follow their lead."

She adds that she is comfortable with kids on both sides of the camera, having taught photography to Bay Area children at Studio One in Oakland.

Lefkowitz also sells a variety of photography-related items, including handmade fabric-covered frames by Molly West and leather-bound photo albums.

Her studio is open daily by appointment. Because she is often out on a shoot, Lefkowitz encourages you to call first, but you are welcome to drop by.

—Stephanie Rapp



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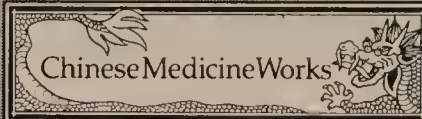
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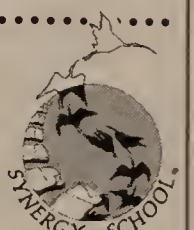
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FAMILY ADVENTURES
ARE WE THERE YET?
CLOSE TO HOME

Polynesian Paradise on Nob Hill

Taking the Kids to the Tonga Room

By Janis Cooke Newman

My 8-year-old son stands in awe before a wooden tiki god with a mouth full of pointed teeth.

"That is so cool," Alex says, with absolutely no trace of irony.

He also thinks the mushroom-shaped thatched roof above our table and the glass balls in nets strung along the walls are the epitome of fine interior design.

"Can we get some of those?" he asks, pointing to a collection of pastel-colored plastic starfish.

This is the first great thing about taking kids to the Tonga Room at the Fairmont Hotel on Nob Hill—their unabashed affection for all things tiki. Alex is in love with the three-faced goddess at the entrance, the "volcanic" rock grotto with big-screen TV behind the bar, the Polynesian longboats hanging from the ceiling, and of course, the rectangular lagoon that fills the center of the restaurant.

"Can I go in there?" he asks, eyeing one of the giant clamshells scattered along the bottom.

This is an impulse that isn't entirely inappropriate. Back in the 1930s, the Tonga Room lagoon was known as The Plunge and served as the hotel pool.

Before Alex can pursue his idea of reviving The Plunge, a waiter in a Hawaiian shirt arrives at our table with three cocktails the color of an equatorial sunset.

This is the second great thing about taking kids to the Tonga Room—the drinks. Tropically-minded tipplers under 21 can suck down juice-filled cocktails festooned with little paper umbrellas and maraschino cherries, while grown-up drinkers get to order from an assortment of creatively named

cocktails like the Scorpion ("Beware: One too many may sting!"), Blue Hawaii, and Bora Bora Horror—not to mention the Lava Bowl, which according to the menu, actually comes filled with the "nectar of the gods."

My husband and I order mai tais, which taste pretty nectary-of-the-gods to me. Alex collects our umbrellas and eats our maraschino cherries.

"I'm hungry," he says, red dye no. 3 staining his newly grown-in front teeth.

Which brings us to the third great thing about taking kids to the Tonga Room—the Happy Hour buffet. For only six bucks a person, you can feast on spareribs and potstickers, egg rolls and chow mein, chicken wings and fried shrimp, as well as a platter of fruit and cheese, which looks a little weird in the middle of all those Chinese appetizers.

Alex cannot believe he is allowed to have as many pork buns as he wants. My husband cannot believe how good the spareribs are. I cannot believe that every time I go up to the buffet, there are only two potstickers left.

As we walk back to our table after our fifth or sixth trip to the buffet—the



A three-faced goddess shows you which way to turn at the entrance to the Tonga Room.

plates are very small—we hear a crack of thunder so loud a little girl with a unicorn on her T-shirt levitates right out of her rattan chair. And here's the fourth great thing about taking kids to the Tonga Room—the thunderstorm.

Every half hour, the recorded birdcalls and slack guitar tunes are replaced by the rumble of thunder and



Happy Hour at the Fairmont Hotel's Tonga Room is all you could ask for—swaying music from the islands, mai tais decorated with tiny umbrellas, a buffet with chicken wings and potstickers, and rain, thunder, and lightning every 30 minutes.

Photos by Ken Newman

the frenzied beating of jungle drums. Strobe lights blink on and off, simulating lightning or the flash of a busload of tourist cameras. Then, with all the suddenness of a real tropical storm, rain beats down into the lagoon.

Sure it's kitschy, but your kids aren't going to notice that. They're going to think it's as cool as the real thing—cooler, because this thunderstorm is inside.

To celebrate the change in the weather, my husband and I order another round of mai tais, then ask for the check. And here's the best thing about taking kids to the Tonga Room during Happy Hour—the bill.

You get exotic drinks named after poisonous insects and Elvis songs for \$5.95 (a steal in a hotel bar), and your kids get dinner and a thunderstorm for six bucks. That's a whole lot cheaper than Disneyland. And you can drink. In fact, the one-drink minimum pretty much makes it a requirement.

The only downside is that you might

wind up with a longboat hanging from your living-room ceiling.

Tiki Tips

The Tonga Room is on the terrace level of the Fairmont Hotel, 950 Mason Street. Parking near the hotel is expensive. Better to take Muni downtown and ride the cable car up to the top of Nob Hill—more fun, too. Happy Hour is Monday through Friday, from 5 until 7 p.m.

And while we're on the subject of taking kids to hotel bars: Equinox, the revolving restaurant/bar at the top of the Hyatt Regency near the Embarcadero is another popular kid spot. Try to get a table by the window, so your kids can see just how fast you're moving—the windowsill stays still while you circle around, getting a 360-degree view of downtown San Francisco and the bay. One word of caution, don't forget to remind your kids that when they come out of the bathroom, your table will have moved. ☐

Are We There Yet? is a Noe Valley Voice feature about places to go and things to do with your kids. If there's an activity or outing you'd like to see explored, please e-mail Janis Cooke Newman at thereyet@noevalleyvoice.com.

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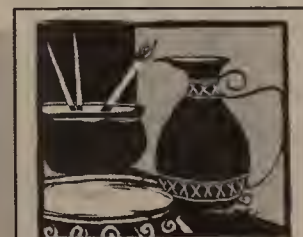
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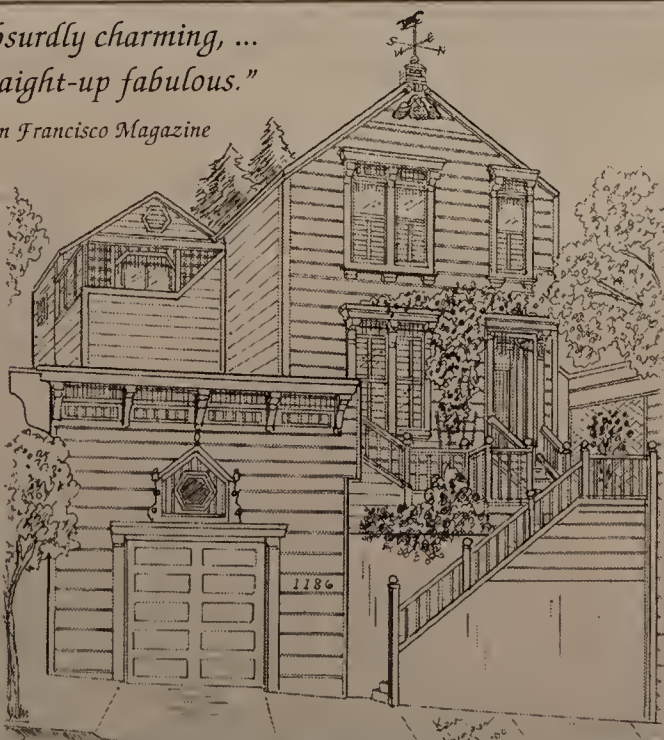
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JAMES LICK Middle School REPORT

Our 2003 Mexico Trip: Can you imagine bringing a group of vibrant middle school students on a field trip, and experiencing total silence? Such was the awe of the 23 James Lick students who traveled through the rainforests of Yucatan last month to enter the great pyramid at Palenque (*Pah-LEN-kay*). Descending the steep steps down to a tomb obscured by centuries of total darkness, they approached the long-concealed sarcophagus and illuminated it with their flashlights. Did it contain the remains of an ancient Mayan ruler, or those of an extraterrestrial being? The following day, they swam in a freshwater pool with a baby crocodile, before leaving Merida for a trip through the emerald jungle to Cancun and more swimming

in the world's second largest coral reef.

Snowy Rewards: Students who fulfilled attendance and assignment completion requirements in our after-school homework program enjoyed sledding on the snowy slopes of South Lake Tahoe on Saturday, Feb. 22. Natalia Lopez-Whitaker supervises this important daily program, which also includes a wide range of enrichment activities.

Coffee with the Principal: Parents, neighbors, and merchants are invited to join school principal Janice Daniels for coffee between 9:30 and 11 a.m. on the last Friday of each month in Room 107 for open discussion of school-related issues. The James Lick Community Alliance meetings continue on the last Wednesday of the month at 12:30, with lunch provided.

Get a GRIP: Roberto Pena has returned to our staff to implement the new Gang Risk Intervention Program (GRIP). At the middle school level, the program focuses on identifying at-risk students, monitoring attendance, and encouraging involvement in school activities. During the week of March 10, GRIP will sponsor a lunchtime peace rally (March 14)

and an afternoon dance.

College—Making It Happen: On Feb. 26, Jaclyn Johnson, representing San Francisco State University, presented an overview of higher education to parents who participate in GEAR UP, our early college-readiness program. Johnson also explained the steps to college admission and the importance of enrolling in college preparatory classes in high school.

Our annual **Black History Month Assembly** on Feb. 21 featured musical performances by the school's Jazz Band and African Drum Group. On Feb. 23, our student orators traveled to Thurgood Marshall High School to participate in the district's annual oratorical contest.

Free Money? The School Beautification Day scheduled for March has been postponed by the sponsoring organization due to funding cuts, but as one door closes, another opens. Our local Bell Market will be participating in ESCRIP, a partnership program through which shoppers can direct corporate contributions to the school of their choice. If you have a frequent shoppers card from Bell Market, Safe-

way, or other participating merchants, you can sign up for the program, and the merchant will contribute a few cents to James Lick each time you use your card. We invite your support, so more of our students can participate in academic enrichment experiences next year.

The amazing **James Lick Talent Show** will rock the halls again on April 9 and 10, with one performance filling the auditorium at night with parents, and another the following day for students. Many of the young musicians who will perform received free instruction through our after-school music program using instruments donated by generous people like you.

Make a Difference! Please contact Gail Koucereck, student adviser, or Denise Rueda, parent liaison, at 695-5675, to confirm dates, volunteer, or get more information about the school.

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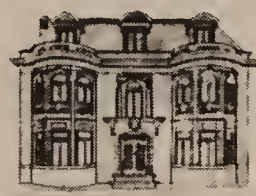
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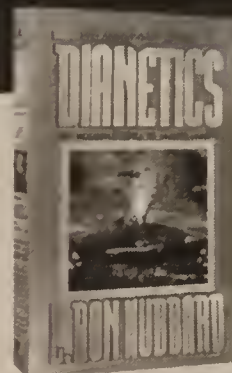
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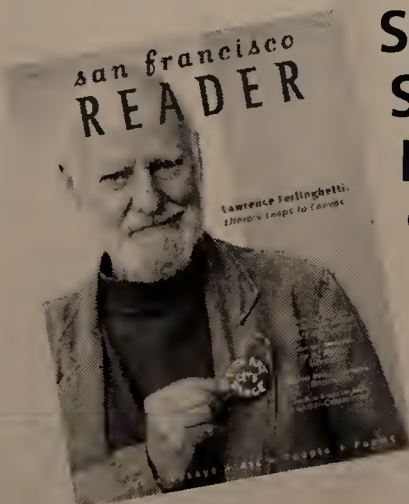
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BOOKS in our BRANCH

Your reading list this month, selected by Noe Valley branch librarians Roberta Greifer and Carol Small, features stories by John Steinbeck's son, writings about the Free Speech Movement, and a mouse who makes magic. To find out what books are available, call 695-5095 or visit the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Branch Library at 451 Jersey Street, near Castro Street. Besides books, the branch offers magazines, videos, DVDs, and the archives and index to the *Noe Valley Voice*. It also has periodicals such as *USA Today* and the *New York Times*, a collection of books in Spanish, a women's literature section, and a section devoted to college and career resources. Branch hours are Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Wednesdays, 1 to 9 p.m.; Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Fridays, 1 to 6 p.m.; and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Adult Fiction

- ◆ In the short-story collection *Down to a Soundless Sea*, by Thomas Steinbeck (John Steinbeck's son), sailors, doctors, and ranchers attempt to eke out a living along California's rugged central coast.
- ◆ In *Gorgeous Lies* by Martha McPhee, a dying therapist and his unconventional family struggle to come to terms with the betrayals and misunderstandings of the past.
- ◆ *The Time of Our Singing*, by Richard Powers, is about three interracial American siblings, united by their shared love of song.

Adult Nonfiction

- ◆ An offshoot of an introductory writing workshop conducted by Wally Lamb, *Couldn't Keep It to Myself: Testimonies from Our Imprisoned Sisters* is a collection of personal narratives by 11 women prisoners at York Correctional Institution.
- ◆ Part history, part memoir, *Dancing at Ciro's* by Sheila Weller is an expose of the famous American nightclub, its Hollywood regulars, and the Pandora's box of secrets shared by the family who owned it.
- ◆ *1421: The Year That China Discovered America* by Gavin Menzies convincingly pulls together ancient maps, astronomy, and surviving accounts of Chinese explorers to prove that the Chinese arrived 70 years before Columbus.
- ◆ With a preface by Len Litwack, *The Free Speech Movement: Reflections on Berkeley in the 1960s*, edited by Robert Cohen and Reginald Zelnik, includes the writings of Greg Marcus, Jonah Raskin, Bettina Aptheker, and Mario Savio.

Children's Fiction

- ◆ Where there's work to be done, the loader, dump truck, bulldozer, and others all do their part in *Get to Work, Trucks!*—written and illustrated by Don Carter. *Ages 1 to 3.*
- ◆ Adventuring and exploring are fun, but there are times when youngsters need reassurance from a parent more than anything else, as Nancy Tafuri points out in *Mama's Little Bears*. *Ages 1 to 3.*
- ◆ Beginning readers will enjoy seeing how the changing of one vowel can create a whole new situation in *Mouse Makes Magic*, a Phonics Reader by Kathryn Heling and Deborah Hembrook, illustrated by Patrick Joseph. *Ages 5 to 7.*

- ◆ In *Tom Mouse*, written by Ursula LeGuin and illustrated by Julie Downing, a young traveler going out into the world is lucky enough to meet an endangered species activist. *Ages 5 to 7.*
- ◆ A child who is anxious about an upcoming activity would take comfort in reading about another's experience in *Little Rat Sets Sail* by Monika Bang-Campbell, illustrated by Molly Bang. *Ages 5 to 8.*
- ◆ With some help from Grandpa and a good friend, a girl moves toward accepting her baby sister in *Iris and Walter and Baby Rose*, an easy reader by Elissa Haden Guest, illustrated by Christine Davenier. *Ages 5 to 8.*
- ◆ The activities and observations of a child during one calendar year are described by Charlotte Zolotow and depicted by Erik Blegvad in *Seasons: A Book of Poems*. *Ages 5 to 8.*
- ◆ Luke, Kevin, and Tracy start out to help some animals in distress because of the flood, but find other dangers await them in P.J. Peterson's suspenseful *Rising Water*. *Ages 10 and up.*

LIBRARY EVENTS

Art Exhibit

◆ Neighborhood artist *Joseph Suarez* shows "The Same Image Drawn on Paper and in Clay Tiles," in a March exhibit of his work at the Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey Street.

Preschool Story Time

◆ Children ages 3 to 5 can hear stories read aloud at *preschool story time*, at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays, March 4, 11, and 25.

Films in February

◆ The library invites preschoolers 3 to 5 to watch a series of short *films* at two times on Tuesday, March 18, at 10 and 11 a.m.

Family Lapsits

◆ The library's family *lapsit* offers stories, songs, and finger plays for infants and toddlers at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 1.

Noe Valley head librarian Roberta Greifer contributed this month's adult book annotations. Children's librarian Carol Small wrote the children's book descriptions. If you get a chance, drop by the library and thank them. —Editor.



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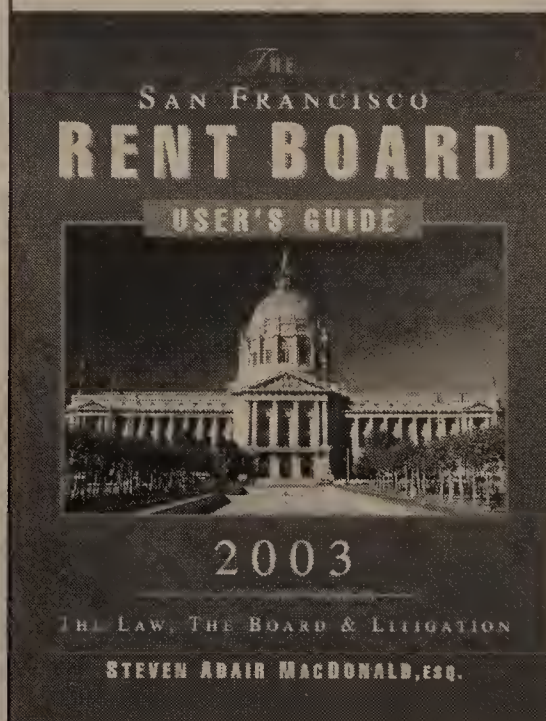
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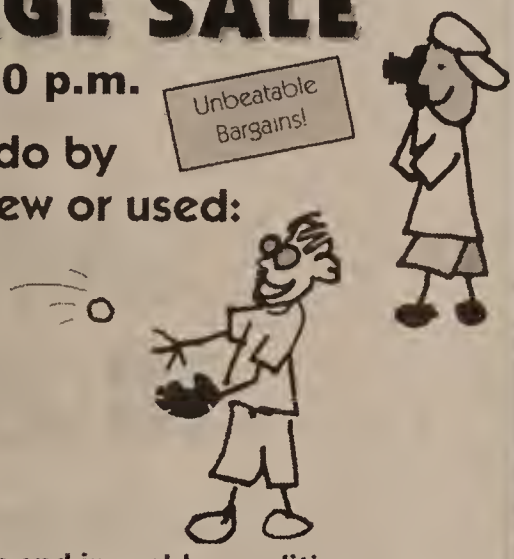
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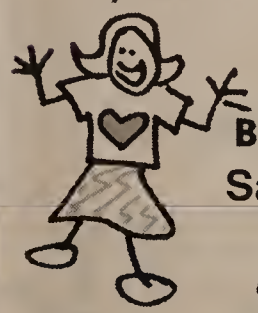
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| Bayview/Anna E. Walden
5075 3rd St. • 715-4100 | Marina
1890 Chestnut St. • 292-2150 | Portola
2450 San Bruno Ave. • 715-4090 |
| Bernal Heights
500 Cortland Ave. • 695-5160 | Merced
155 Winston Dr. • 337-4780 | Potrero
1616 20th St. • 695-6640 |
| Chinatown
1135 Powell St. • 274-0275 | Mission
300 Bartlett St. • 695-5090 | Presidio
3150 Sacramento St. • 292-2155 |
| Eureka Valley/Harvey Milk
3555 16th St. • 554-9445 | Noe Valley/Sally Brunn
451 Jersey St. • 695-5095 | Richmond
351 9th Ave. • 666-7165 |
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1305 18th Ave. • 753-7049 |
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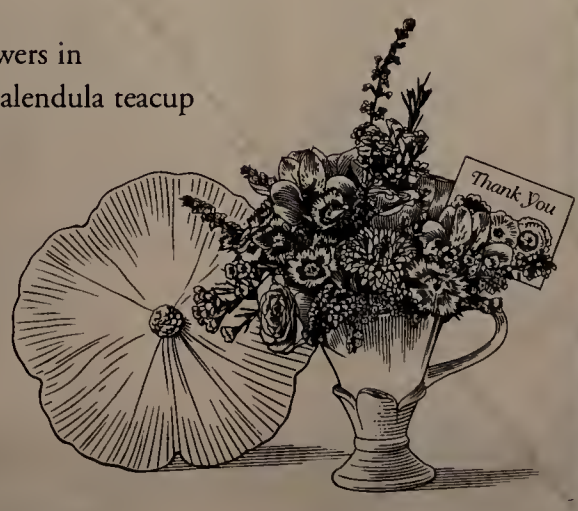
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Advocates for Upper Noe Rec Center
 Contact: Greg Clark, 826-6222
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31869, San Francisco, CA 94131-0869
 Meetings: First Tuesday of month, in the auditorium at Upper Noe Rec Center, Day & Sanchez, 7 p.m.

Castro Area Planning + Action
 Contact: Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230; capa@home4us.org
 Meetings: Second Thursday of month, Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Diamond Heights Community Association
 Contact: Betsy Eddy, 239-5776
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529, San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: First Thursday of month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Dolores Heights Improvement Club
 Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228
 Mailing Address: 3732 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94114
 Meetings: Bimonthly board meetings; membership meetings semi-annually. Call for details.

Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)
 Contact: Keith Eickman, 282-8988; Evelyn Martin, 826-6734; Deanna Mooney, 821-4045
 Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St., San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Held periodically. Call for details.

East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club
 Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753
 Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St., San Francisco, CA 94114
 Meetings: First Wednesday of month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m.

Eureka Valley Promotion Association
 Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114
 Meetings: Third Thursday of every month (except December). Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

Fair Oaks Neighbors
 Contact: Pam Coxson, 648-4977
 Mailing Address: 25 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110
 Meetings: Call for details. The annual Fair Oaks Street Fair is always held the day before Mother's Day.

Friends of Glen Canyon Park
 Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862
 Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

Friends of Noe Valley
 Contact: Jeannene Przyblyski, 282-4334
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146
 Meetings: Second Thursday of month (call to confirm), Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m.

Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association
 Contact: John Barbey, 695-0990
 Mailing Address: P.O. Box 192114, San Francisco, CA 94119
 Meetings: Quarterly. Call for details.

Noe Strolls "Playgroup on Wheels"
 Contact: Martine, noestrolls@aol.com.
 Monthly Stroll: First Tuesday of month, 1 p.m. To receive stroll locations and notices of other events, e-mail your first name, and your baby's first name and age, to noestrolls@aol.com, or log on to the group's web site: www.noestrolls.com.

Noe Valley Democratic Club
 Contact: Dee Andrews, 285-6043
 Mailing Address: 273A 27th St., San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Third Wednesday of month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association
 Contact: Robert Roddick, 641-8692
 Mailing Address: Robert T. Roddick, Noe Valley Law Offices, P.O. Box 460574, San Francisco, CA 94114-6003
 Meetings: Last Wednesday, Bank of America, 24th & Castro, 9 a.m.

Outer Noe Valley Merchants
 Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500
 Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Call for details.

Southwest Mission Neighborhood Association
 Contact: Lori Oshiro, Secretary
 E-mail: lodoosh@pacbell.net
 SWMNA web site: www.lodoosh.com
 Mailing Address: 1345 Guerrero St., San Francisco, CA 94110
 Meetings: Second Thursday of month, Salvation Army, 3550 Cesar Chavez St., 7 p.m. (Membership includes residents who live between Mission and Fair Oaks and Cesar Chavez and 24th streets.)

Upper Noe Neighbors
 Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473
 Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131
 Meetings: Last Thursday of month (call to confirm), Upper Noe Rec Center, Day and Sanchez, 7:30 p.m.

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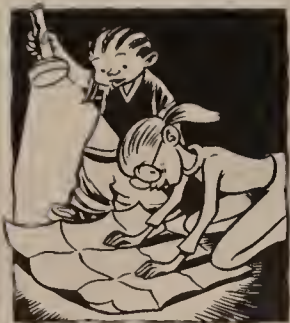
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With Apologies to Bill Watterson. It's doubtful that the comic artist himself created this colorful graffiti on a fence in Quane Alley. But though Watterson retired his famous Calvin and Hobbes strip years ago, his work continues to inspire.

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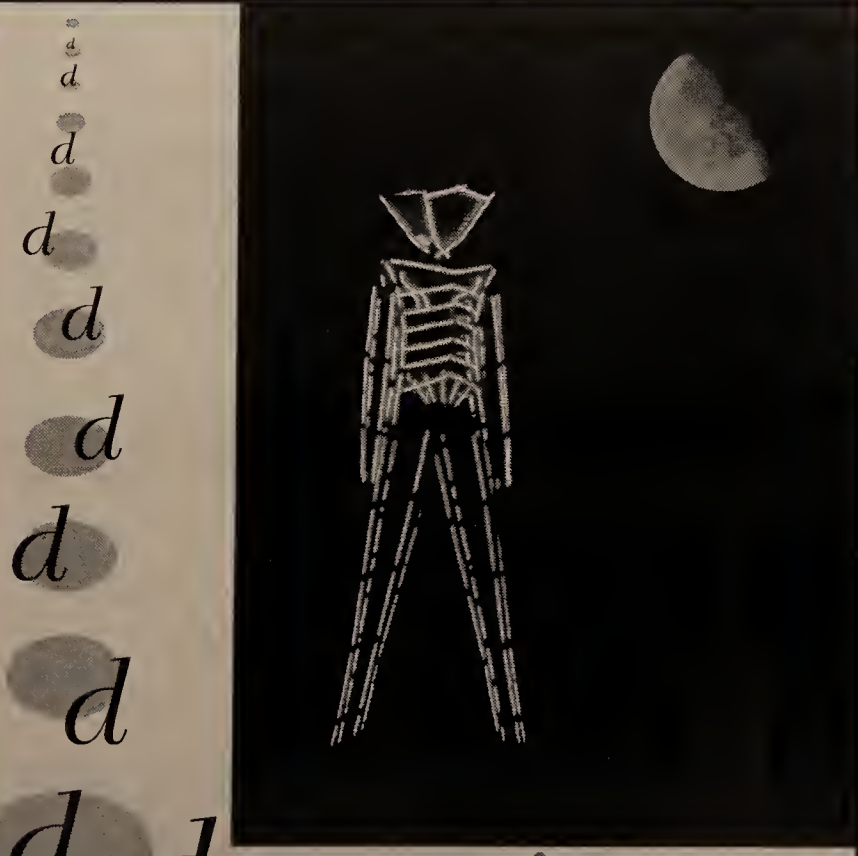
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Beginners Hatha Yoga I Course. This class allows for personal attention and in-depth instruction on basic yoga postures. Please bring a towel or mat, refrain from eating for at least two hours before class, and wear comfortable clothing. Please register five days in advance. Call 415-821-1117. Six Tuesdays beginning March 11, 7:30 to 9 p.m. \$54. Integral Yoga Institute, 770 Dolores St.

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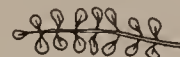
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The next *Noe Valley Voice* will be the April 2003 issue, distributed in Noe Valley on or before April 1. **THE DEADLINE FOR CLASS ADS IS MARCH 15, 2003.**

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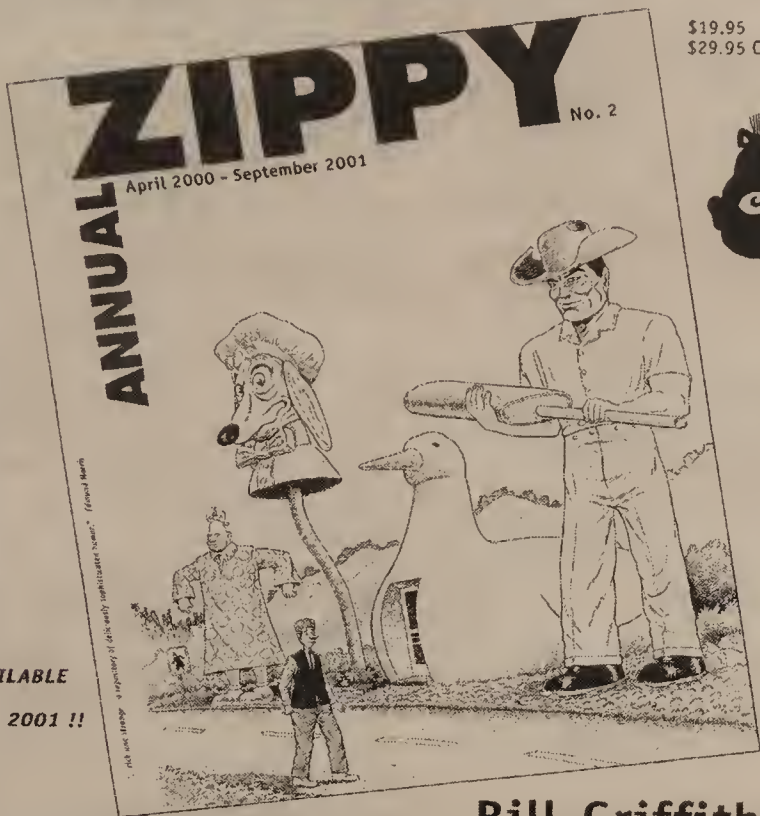


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THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

and now for the
RUMORS
behind the news

Dig We Must

By Mazook

REILLY RESURRECTION: The dust has settled at the corner of Dolores and 29th streets, after the Reilly Co. mortuary building, circa 1925, fell to the wrecking ball in early February. The local monument, which also housed a funeral school, will be replaced by a condominium complex built by developer Joe Cassidy (see Voice June 2002 issue).

But the mortuary lives on. For the past six years, Reilly Co. has been operated by the Duggan-Welch family, which has owned and operated mortuaries in San Francisco for more than 120 years. Reilly Co. is not closed, as was implied here last month, but has relocated to 3434 17th Street, where it now shares space with Duggan Welch Funeral Services.

Steve Welch and his father, William "Bill" Welch, are currently operating Reilly and Duggan, respectively. "Steve is the fifth generation in our family business," says Bill Welch. "It was started by my great-grandfather James Hagan in 1883, down on Valencia Street at Duboce, which used to be called 13th Street."

In 1916, Hagan's daughter married William Duggan, Bill's grandfather, who was a founder of Duggan & O'Reilly at 1230 Valencia, and then moved it to its current 17th Street location in 1929.

Steve Welch says Reilly Co. was able to maintain the 29th and Dolores location as long as the San Francisco College of Mortuary Science occupied the second floor (located there since 1995), but when the school moved to American River College in Folsom, Calif., the loss of rental revenue "made the numbers challenging," and at that point, the family decided to consolidate the two locations.



PUSHING THE BUILDING ENVELOPE: It appears that Mel Murphy, the developer-owner who has proposed a residential project at 949 Sanchez, has met with the neighbors and agreed to scale back his plans. He says he will preserve the existing 900-square-foot 1905 house at the back of the property.

The initial plans called for demolishing the house and building a three-story, two-unit building at the front of the lot, plus a two-story building for garage and studio/storage area at the back of the lot. A few months ago, the neighbors formed a committee with an alarming name, "Save Sanchez Street," to deal with the 5,350-square-foot project.

At the end of January, the neighbors and the owner's architect, Drake Gardener, along with lawyer Alice Suet Yee Barkley, met to discuss the issues dividing the two sides. According to Save Sanchez Street spokesperson Dick Juhl, to the surprise of most assembled, "the developer was willing to change his plans and significantly reduce the project."

According to lawyer Barkley, "The new proposal would construct a new two-story single-family home at the front, and renovate the existing building in the rear of the lot to a single-family home, without any changes to the existing building envelope [height, depth, and width]." Architect Gardener says the total project has been trimmed to 3,600 square feet, and "has met the concerns of the neighbors."

The developer will submit his revised plans to City Planning in the near future, he says. In the meantime, the neighbors



Last month, residents said their final goodbyes to the Reilly Co. mortuary, which had occupied the corner of Dolores and 29th streets for more than 75 years. The building was demolished to make way for a 13-unit condominium complex. Meanwhile, Reilly Co. is still operating and has moved to Duggan Welch Funeral Services on 17th Street. Photo by Nojib Joe Hakim

say they will withdraw their original requests for a discretionary review.

It all seems so simple. We'll have to see.

An interesting footnote: The architect, Drake Gardener, who has his offices in Novato, will soon make another appearance on the local scene. He is designing the new residential/commercial development at the boarded-up house on 24th Street, across from Bell Market.



THAT'S AMORE: The Jan. 31 closing of Noi's restaurant—on 24th Street just above Castro, where Little Italy reigned for so many years—took everyone by surprise and created a mild panic among fans of this classy Italian bistro. Things got even more interesting when the place went through a seven-day remodel and reopened with a new fireplace, slightly different ambience, new menu, and an easier-to-pronounce name, Luba (just in case, it's "LOO-bah").

If you recall, Noi's was opened about two years ago by chef Stefano Coppola and Diego Ragazzo, who acted as the maître d'. Turns out that Coppola and Ragazzo have now dissolved their partnership, and Coppola has taken over the eatery, bringing in a whole new crew.

"It was an amicable breakup," says Coppola. "We just each wanted to go in different directions, especially with the menu. I wanted to serve a more traditional Italian fare: more pastas and homemade breads, and maintain reasonable prices for our customers."

The new staff came over from Luna Rossa, Coppola's other restaurant on Russian Hill, which he just sold. "I am really happy now that I can make the decisions on my own, and can devote my [undivided] time and energy to this restaurant."

Over at the very popular Eric's Chinese restaurant at Church and 27th streets, owner Tony Sung wants to thank the neighborhood for putting up with the two huge trash bins that have been parked on 27th Street outside his building for the better part of a year, thereby depriving us of two valuable parking spaces. Sung also apologizes for the inconvenience caused by his construction project, and explains that he has been doing a seismic upgrade of Eric's c.1890 building.

And he adds, the bins should be removed by the time you read this (end of February). The upgrading work should be finished soon, too.



DEPT. OF STOP AND GO: On Feb. 4, the Board of Supervisors passed several resolutions about parking zones in our neighborhood. Probably the most significant was the one that extended parking meters up 24th Street from Castro toward Diamond. The new meters will about 100 feet up on the north side, and almost 150 feet up on the south side of the street.

Hopefully, this will satisfy those merchants and residents who have been at odds over the number of meters to be in-

stalled. Now all we need is enforcement of the one-hour parking limit, so 24th Street shopkeepers and their employees won't park their cars all day and run out and feed the meters—a common complaint in Downtown Noe Valley.

Also, several more blocks have joined Areas S and Z—the residential permit parking zones slowly creeping into Noe Valley. The new blocks include both sides of 25th Street between Dolores and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 58



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RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57

Church, Fair Oaks between 21st and 22nd streets, the east side of Valencia between 22nd and 23rd, and both sides of 23rd Street between Noe and Castro streets. Without a permit sticker on your car in these zones, you will be limited to two-hour parking between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Curiously, everything but parking was on the minds of the 60 or so souls who showed up for the Friends of Noe Valley meeting on Feb. 13, which featured our new District 8 supervisor, Bevan Dufty.

The big-time issues in our little province were the need for more stop signs and for limits on the spread of monster homes in our neighborhood. Friends also wanted to know what Dufty was going to do to improve our schools. The last issue was dessert, and people really enjoyed the baked goods generously donated by the Noe Valley Bakery.

The general public is invited to the next Friends meeting on Wednesday, April 9, to discuss the fate of our local parks, following expected budget cuts at Rec and Park. Bring your thoughts to the Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library at 7 p.m.

Maybe we could establish a citizens brigade of volunteers who would go lock and unlock the restroom facilities at our Noe parks each day. We need them open from sunup to sundown, especially in the spring and summer. I betcha the gardeners would really, really appreciate that, if you catch my drift.



MOVIN' ON UP: True to its name, Nomad Rugs has relocated from its smallish



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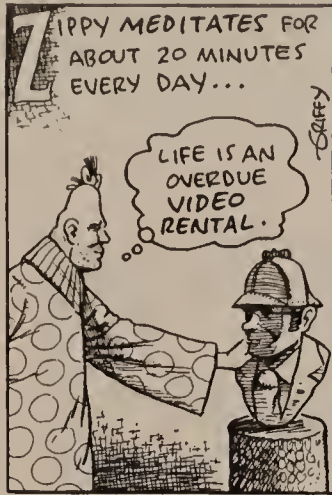
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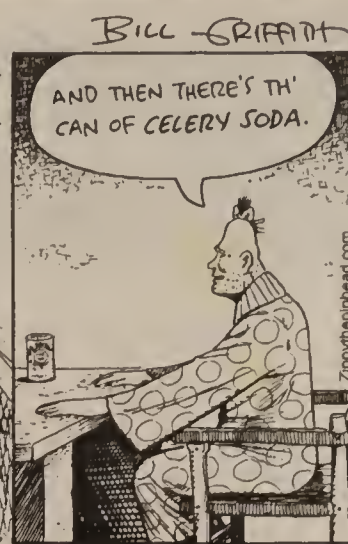
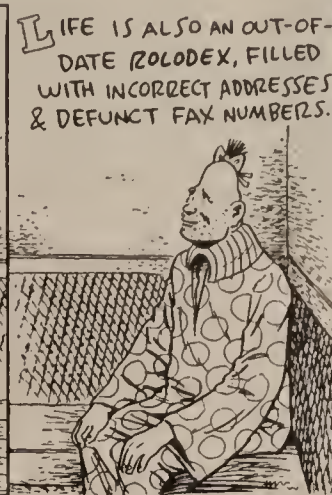
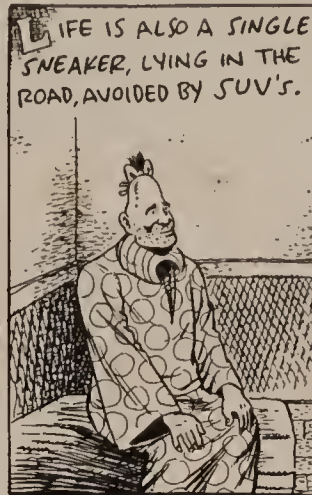
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"TAKE A SLUG"



store on Church Street into much larger quarters on 24th Street, in the long-vacant spot next to Echo Furniture (near Chattanooga). Nomad owner Chris Wahlgren says he has gone from 700 square feet to 2,500, and almost doubled his inventory of fine Oriental rugs. "I have also imported some tribal furniture from Pakistan and West Africa," says Wahlgren.

Cover to Cover has gotten some fresh energy from its new partners Paula and John Foley, who join Tracy Wynne and Mark Ezarik in operating the very popular 24th Street bookstore. The Foleys are longtime Noe Valleyans who recently moved to Cole Valley. Ironically, Paula, who has become involved in the day-to-day operations of the store, now has to commute to work.

The upcoming major event at Cover to Cover is the Saturday, June 21, 12:01 a.m. release of J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*. A pajama party is planned, and the bookstore will donate 10 percent of its Potter profits to the school of your choice. Back in 2000, hordes of people in their jammies camped in and around Cover to Cover, awaiting the midnight release of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.



BATTER UP THAT PRAWN: Former S.F. Giants baseball manager Dusty Baker was spotted on 24th Street last month, enjoying the local nightlife. Speaking from his spring training camp in Mesa, Ariz., Baker confirmed to the *Voice* that he had indeed made a trip to Downtown N.V., to go out to dinner at Alcatrazes restaurant, on 24th near Castro. Baker said he may be from Sacramento, but he loves that Cajun cuisine.

"It was one of the places I wanted to go before leaving the Bay Area for Arizona," said Baker, who now manages the Chicago Cubs. "I also want to thank all the reg-

ulars at the Peaks [bar], for inviting me in for a drink before dinner."

Baker explained that before hitting Alcatrazes, he had parked his car on Castro in front of the Peaks tavern. "They brought me in for a goodbye toast and wanted us all to do 'shooters,' but I settled for just one shot of Scotch," he said. When everybody told him how sorry they were to see him leave the Giants, he clarified that it wasn't exactly that he wanted to leave, but rather that he was "told to go."

His interview with the *Voice* ended when somebody in the background yelled, "Hey, Dusty, we gotta go," which was to play a game against the Giants in the opening series of the Cactus League.

Baker wished everyone in Noe Valley good cheer and said he hoped to stop by again soon, when he's back in town. Did he think his Cubbies would face the Giants in the next National League Championship Series? Baker: "Nothing would make me happier than to bring a winner to Chicago."

The last time the Cubs won the National League pennant was in 1945, and their last World Series win was in 1908. Makes you wanta say: Go, Cubs!



JUNGLE WEBBING: A Noe Valleyan named Karen Gray is working on a unique project centered in the tiny village of Phon Kham, located in Laos, some 7,500 miles away. She's the volunteer project manager for the first Laotian outpost of the World Wide Web. This venture is sponsored by the Jhai Foundation, a non-profit organization, and led by Silicon Valley legend Lee Felsenstein, who invented the portable computer, and Lee Thorn, who funded the project.

Writer Kevin Fagan described the project in the Jan. 17 issue of the *Chronicle*: "Early next month, a villager in the mountainous jungles of northern Laos will climb onto a stationary bicycle hooked to a handmade, wireless computer and pedal his people into the digital age. It will be the first time a human-powered computer has ever linked a Third World village to the Internet by wireless remote."

Tech TV came out to cover the project and took footage of the computers being put together in the basement garage of Gray's Sanchez Street home.

Gray has just returned from those "mountainous jungles" and reports that although the trip did not produce all the desired results, it was invaluable in nearing the goal. The plan is to get this new computer, which they call *Jhai*, Laotian for "hearts and minds working together," to run on Linux software. When it's work-

ing, it will not only send e-mail in the Lao language (a project in itself), but also allow two-way telephone service over the Internet.

"The village has neither electricity nor telephone communications," explains Gray. "We had to set up a wireless network that connects the village to a nearby town, which has electricity and phone service. The computer is set up in the village school, with the 12 watts of electricity (we normally require 90 watts) coming from a pedal-pushed generator." The generator sends the digital data to a relay station, "which is an antenna mounted on a teak tree that's also fitted with solar panels for power." The teak tree relays the info to the town and on to the phone lines.

Gray says the problems are "technical. We just have to build a stronger computer that has no moving parts and can be sealed off from this very difficult environment, which is hot, humid, dusty, and very wet in the monsoon seasons." She says the group is going to rebuild the computer and go back to Laos "before the rainy season starts in May."



THERE'S NOE BUSINESS like show business, and Noe Valley comic actor extraordinaire Geoff Hoyle has successfully staged his newest act. His *Feast of Fools* show has had an extended run at the Marines Memorial Theater, but hurry and go, because it's closing Sunday, March 2, after the matinee performance.

According to the theater's managing director, Joe Mack, "We had great numbers during this run, and [Hoyle] has quite a group of followers. He is a crowd pleaser, and the critics like him, too." The only reason *Feast* has to close, he said, is to make way for a previously scheduled show (Hollywood film couple Joe Bologna and Renee Taylor are performing their comedy *If You Ever Leave Me I'm Going with You*).

Regular Rumors readers might know that Hoyle arrived here from England via Paris in 1973, and started the street theater group called the New Depression Follies. Then he became a part of the Pickle Family Circus, performed with Cirque du Soleil, and appeared with Robin Williams in the movie version of *Popeye*, as well as in the original Broadway production of *The Lion King*.

He says he is excited about *Feast*, which he created with composer and musician Brit Gina Leishman and longtime friend and director Richard Seyd. "We plan to take it to the Edinburgh International Festival this summer and probably go from there to open it in a London theater by fall. Then we hope to take it on a worldwide tour," says Hoyle.

He could even take it to the jungles of Laos, since the production has no words. Hoyle does it all in mime, to the accompaniment of Leishman's music. "All three of us are Brits, and now we're returning and could become the next British invasion," he laughs.

Well, good luck, Geoff, Karen, Dusty, and all the rest of you out there in Noe land. Ciao for now. ☐

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THE LAST PAGE

WALLS

❖ BY CAROL MARSHALL ❖

I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE of her once. A hunched figure, snailing along the sidewalk. An ancient puckered face. A living dried-apple doll. I thought I remembered an old dog wheezing along behind her, but I must have been mistaken.

A few inches separated our house from hers. At the rear, where our kitchens met, I think the walls actually touched. From our living room, overlooking a busy street, we couldn't hear our neighbor at all, and we took to having our "private times" there to avoid being overheard by her. The rest of the house was another matter. Even with the water running and various appliances humming away, it was impossible to lose the sensation that our neighbor was in the house with us. We learned to live with her. It was, we thought, a small price to pay for a great house in a great neighborhood in San Francisco.

I work at home and came to know her best, eagerly sharing little anecdotes about her with Jim when he returned from work. I knew our neighbor was very old. Even if I had never seen her, I would have gleaned that from the shuffling sound of her movements and the thinness of her voice. I knew she must be lonely. I knew that her clothes were frayed because I often saw them hanging on the line in her small garden.

The poor condition of her clothes I chalked up to poverty. The badly overgrown condition of her yard I attributed to her lack of strength. I also knew that although she liked to sing, she was not very good at it. Her favorites were old songs that were popular years before our parents were born, although she sometimes delighted us by singing along with something more current.

For some reason, we found her singing extremely funny. On one occasion when we heard her warbling away, we found ourselves actually rolling around on the floor, wiping tears of laughter from our eyes and holding our hands over one another's mouths to keep her from hearing how much fun we were having at her expense. We laughed even harder when Jim wondered aloud if she was dancing along.

One of us, I'm sure it was Jim and not me, tried to imitate what she might look like moving to rap music. Later, we did penance for our insensitivity by trudging up to 24th Street, where we bought a large box of pastries. We left them on our neighbor's doorstep.

We came somehow to the conclusion that she had a cat, although we never saw it and although I still carried with me that dim recollection of a dog. Senior citizens keep cats. Definitely. A cat was present. One day, in a burst of neighborly love, we left a brightly wrapped package containing a cat toy in her mailbox, so certain were we at one time about the existence of the cat. We never asked ourselves how it could be that despite the clarity of everything else we heard from her side of the wall, we never heard a single meow.

What we did hear was the scuffing of slippers against a wood floor, the rattle of pans, static from a badly tuned radio, water splashing in a sink, the flush of a toilet, pages being turned, the swoosh of broom bristles, the opening and closing of doors and windows. Occasionally, we heard the crash of something fragile hitting the floor and breaking. One day, this happened at least six times while I was trying to work, and when Jim arrived, I entertained him with a wildly exaggerated rendition of the broken pottery symphony.

We knew all about her. Her name we learned from mail mistakenly left in our box. Emily Anne Willows. How quaint, we thought. Old-fashioned. Dear. The

return address on the envelope pleased us. Thrush & Darling. London. Positively Dickensian. We had never before detected a British accent in her, but suddenly we could hear it clearly. At Christmastime that year, we left on her threshold a box of Christmas-cracker party favors. On Christmas Day, we pictured her sitting in her drawing room, her sweet white head adorned with the colorful paper crown which had been released when she popped her cracker. In our imaginations, we saw her happily gobbling up her figgy pudding.

ONE DAY, I was treating myself to a glass of wine at Le Zinc, which had become a sort of secret afternoon addiction for me. I overheard a couple discussing an Englishman named Maxwell Thrush who was in Noe Valley to assist local law enforcement authorities in locating someone. Thrush? I recalled the return address on the envelope addressed to our neighbor.

Our Miss Emily Anne, the subject of an international woman hunt! I fled Le Zinc and called Jim on my cell phone as I raced home. Impressed by my excitement, Jim came home early to join in the fun. We spent the evening and well into the wee hours of the morning with our ears pressed to the wallpaper, struggling to hear what the fugitive next door might be up to. We heard a flush, a squeak, a swish, a strange *rat-tat-tat*. Periodically, we stumbled over one another to get to the living room. There we peered out from behind closed curtains hoping for a glimpse of Mr. Thrush

and/or something sinister. Finally, we went to sleep.

Jim's business got busy over the following weeks and I had several deadlines to meet, so we kind of forgot about Emily Anne and Thrush and the rest of it.

TWO DAYS AGO, a policeman appeared at our door. He seemed pretty skeptical about our knowing our neighbor when neither of us could really describe her. Mentioning the phantom dog and cat didn't go over too well either. When we couldn't say for certain when we'd last heard any noise from next door, we really disappointed him, and telling him about the Thrush connection only seemed to make matters worse. Maxwell Thrush, he huffily informed us, had been searching for a young boy. Then he told us our neighbor's name was not Emily Anne Willows but Mary Jordan. We have since learned that the real Emily Anne lives at the same house number as our neighbor's, but on the next street. Apparently, when we stuffed that letter into Mary's box, we only compounded the postman's error.

I guess we really never knew Mary, who had been lying dead, inches from our bed, for several days before the police came to see us. Now we know that her clothes had been neglected because she chose to spend her wealth, which was substantial, on books and theater and had never cared much about fashion. The garden had been a mess because, frankly, it didn't interest her all that much. Mary had been a retired opera singer from Manhattan who hated cats and was puzzled but amused at the anonymous gift of a cat toy and the mysterious appearance of pastries. She had thought her young neighbors sweet but not too bright. The box of Christmas crackers was but one of many indications of their mental deficiencies. Mary hadn't a drop of British blood in her and would never be caught wearing a paper party hat. She really had no desire to get to know her neighbors better. She hadn't been lonely at all, to begin with, and moreover, they seemed, to put it charitably, a little dull. Finally, Mary had no real intrigue in her life and had died peacefully of natural causes at the not-very-old age of 72.

All of this I learned from Mary's niece in Santa Cruz, who came to her aunt's house to pack things up. Mary had spoken to her niece nearly every day from a telephone in her living room, the only room in the house in which she'd had any privacy from us. The niece knew us as the dopey kids next door, giggling uncontrollably, listening at the walls, falling over themselves to spy on her aunt, giving strange anonymous presents, and idling away their days drinking wine in cafés (apparently Mary had noticed me more often than I had her!).

Mary had liked us anyway, because we were cute and young and well intentioned. Given the proximity of our walls, it had seemed to her that, like it or not, we practically lived in her house. Small price to pay for a great house in a great neighborhood in San Francisco.

❖ ❖ ❖

Carol Marshall knows what it's like to live in close proximity to others. She grew up in New York City, lived for a time in a tiny San Francisco apartment, and now resides in a house on a hill just a whisper away from her Mill Valley neighbors. She selected Noe Valley as the setting for her story because it is her favorite Bay Area "village." Twenty years as a mediator and arbitrator have taught her that relying on assumptions, stereotypes, and sketchy facts almost always leads to major roadblocks in communication.



PHOTO BY PAMELA GERARD